

# The Parsi Book of Books

## THE ZEND-AVESTA

BY

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*Heva Priest, BOMBAY.*

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**By**  
**The same author are The**  
**following works:**

1. Zarathushtra and Zarathushtrianism  
in The Avesta.
૨. અવસ્તા પ્રમાણે જરથોશ્ત્ર અને જરથોશ્તી દીન.
3. A True Zarthoshti Guide,  
અરે જરથોશ્તી રેહનમૂન.







## PREFACE.

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Even at this date though thirty years and over have elapsed since the discussion I had in a friendly way as a student of the St. Xavier's College with my revered teacher, the late Rev. Father Henry Bochum S. J., Professor of History and Moral Philosophy, I cannot help recalling his observations on the study of the ancient Iranian Literature and its researches. In the course of that discussion he admitted to the effect that our sacred Literature did receive a liberal measure of attention at the hands of Iranian scholars; but whilst their labour so far was mainly directed to the linguistic researches and to the translations of the important works, the spirit and the philosophy embodied in them were suffered to go without a due meed of their study and attention.

As a student, since, of the religious teachings of Zoroaster and his renowned disciples and successors, I have ever increasingly felt the truth of these observations and the crying deficiency which they earmarked. In penning these pages I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to supply the need. I have all along felt that it is the word of truth and wisdom to declare that there is no subject of human thought and investigation of such transcendent and imminent practical importance as the doctrines and philosophy of the Zoroastrian Religion which presents to mankind the true psychic science. The lessons which this science, as embodied in the Zoroastrian Scriptures, teaches, appertain not only to the future world but to life here below—lessons of abiding practical value for the progress and well-being of the soul in this life and hereafter.

No topic, I maintain, ought to be more frequently and universally insisted upon amongst our Zoroastrians than the

truth of the religion they profess. Nothing is now-a-days so necessary as that their minds be firmly impressed with the incontrovertible fact that their religion constitutes the best of religions and is worthy in the best of sense of their veneration and belief. The thing which modern Parsis need more than any other, is the knowledge of their sacred Books. I remember what a consternation it was that seized all St. Louis, United States, America, during the grand exhibition held in 1904, which I had the good fortune to witness, when one night for want of light the whole city was plunged into darkness. But, as I contemplated the scene around me, I could not then help striking a mental comparison with that darkness which, due to a total lack of moral and religious training, has overtaken my community and which should one day seize them with greater consternation and terror.

The world to-day is passing through troublous times ; there is absolutely no peace reigning anywhere. The powers of good and the forces of evil are contending as fiercely as they ever did before. And it is natural in such a perilous state of the world that we looked for a remedy. The evils prevalent in our community call likewise for a remedy as prompt, deep and sympathising as is the danger itself multifold, far-reaching and menacing. And nowhere is this remedy to be looked for save in moral and religious training. How can that appalling tide of vice which seems to be fast overtaking our people, be stemmed unless moral and religious influences are brought to bear upon them ?

Some Parsis flatter themselves with the belief that individually they are faring comfortably enough without wanting religion to help them in life. They may indeed never feel the want of it whilst they are yet flourishing and prosperous but a day might light upon them when disillusionized they will seek consolation atlast in their blessed Religion in which

lies the accomplishment of the promise: "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee."

Rich as was the inheritance which, when they paid a last farewell to their Fatherland, our ancestors handed down to us at the cost of their life, liberty and worldly assets, it is for us to hand over that legacy to our future generations not only in tact but ever so widened and increased. And this in view of the menacing dangers that in the near future confront Zoroastrian community, is no trifling enterprise. This is consequently no time for slackness, but for strenuous application here and now on our part for the work of religious revival that lies all but ready to the hand of any Zoroastrian, whether priest or layman, who will dedicate himself to it. If my personal convictions count for anything, I trust and believe and the belief is strong in me—that there is a religious revival in store for us. This happy consummation may be brought about if only we find men who will startle and awake our Parsis out of their serene and conventional self-complacency.

The Zoroastrian Religion by its uncompromising advocacy of all that is good, has always proved itself a formidable enemy to physical and moral evils and scared them away, so to say, from their strongholds. Why should we now, above all times, be indifferent to it, since good and evil are still at war, as forsooth they ever will be till the day of Frashokereti? Let us then invoke the help of our mighty Religion and straightway shall we meet our spiritual health and regeneration.

It is character in the first and the last instance that will, as indeed it has in the past, help to maintain our place as a leading community in India and the superstructure for our character is our Religion. But we cannot attain to that full measure of help which our sublime Religion is capable of rendering unless we understand its tenets and practise them and conduct ourselves as true Zoroastrians, promoting whilst we

live, truth, justice, obedience, humility, kindness, prosperity and peace.

It once happened that a party of workmen engaged in making some excavations in Kensington, England, unearthed a number of coins of the Georgian period, principally "spade guineas" and "half guineas." The coins were naturally a good deal tarnished and discoloured and the workmen not knowing their historical value cast them away as useless. It would be unfair to the workmen to characterise this as a callous action, for it was caused by the ignorance of the men ; but if they had been aware of the value from antiquarian standpoint of what they threw away, they would have made themselves liable to a grave accusation. Yet such or something very akin to this, nay, much worse, is the callousness of which we in spite of all our knowledge are so often guilty. And how frequently do we reject as worthless rubbish, things which are far and away more precious and more over wholesomely valuable than a hoard of spade guineas. And what is it that in our case we as Parsis discard or often throw away? Alas! that it should be our own Religion, the Religion of the greatest Teacher, the most profound Thinker the world has ever seen or produced.

It is no idle curiosity which bids us enquire why Parsis, so many of them and so often show much cold regard for their Religion? Why do some of them show a ready predilection for other creeds or cults in preference to their own? Why many of them turn atheists or materialists? The reason is open as day. It is their ignorance which leads them astray. They know next to nothing of the merits of their Religion.

It is, therefore, the paramount duty of every Zoroastrian to strive for a knowledge at least of the salient features of the Zend-Avesta Records, namely, their character as depositaries of theological and psychological facts. He should make his

best efforts to understand the heavenly principles embodied in them and put them into operation in his every day life and employment, so that he may uplift his self and his surroundings and be alive to their potency and power. It behoves therefore all true Zoroastrian scholars of the Zend-Avesta to show to their coreligionists why the Zend-Avesta is the most glorious Book extant, also to denote and emphasize the magnificence of the truths and blessings which it reveals and to set before them what features of Zoroastrianism constitute for it the highest claim to the world's highest praise and admiration. Similar considerations have weighed with me, as the writer of this book, to put before my reader the essential character of the Zoroastrian Religion, and to show him what makes it worthy of their abiding faith and adherence.

I do not undertake in this volume to show to my reader the absolute superiority of the Zoroastrian Religion but I trust that when he has read the book through he will associate himself readily to my belief that in comparison with other religious systems as have endeavoured to explain the phenomena of Life and the Universe, there is an unquestionable and a divine superiority in Zoroaster's teachings. The reader, I also trust, shall be rationally convinced that these teachings constitute a true religion which is not only not contrary to but in precise harmony with nature, with our intelligence, conscience and reason, that its truths and optimism strengthen and brighten our life and prepare it for a higher and happier spiritual existence.

It shall be one of the aims of my book to convince my coreligionists by reasoning and argument that Zoroaster was a true Messenger of God, delegated expressly to this world to announce to it the Divine Law (Dîn) and that therefore none shall be deceived and none shall despair, who pins his faith to the Law as he preached, obeys and respects his word and follows his enjoinders. It shall be my further endeavour

to lay in prominent relief before my reader the good and salient features of the Zend-Avesta which rises above some of the absurdities and intellectual and spiritual subtleties expounded and made so much of by some of the religions of the world. My aim is to prove that the Zoroastrian doctrines and principles are so consistent and withal so eminently logical that they needs must induce in men the deepest and the most assured convictions ; also, that they engender in them the warmest enthusiasm and reverence, and inspire them with the ambition to be strong, steadfast, honest and worthy souls. My one further aim is to show how Zoroastrian dogmas and tenets inculcate in us the will and the desire to look with deeper penetration into human life and the Universe, how by giving life and force to our highest faculties and by bringing them into the healthiest and most harmonious activity quicken in us the impulse for the pursuit of Perfection. Last, though not the least, it is the aim of my book to stem the delusions of the weak-minded in our community, victims of tricksters and eloquent talkers who seek occasions to figure before the public and proclaim and promote their jumble of conflicting philosophies, their patented systems of religion, their newly discovered panaceas for human evils, who try by various methods to bewitch the public and fool the soft-minded and lead the Prophet's true followers away from their faith, who parade their false notions and views anent God, man and life in plausible language and beguile thus many a simple but conscientious seeker of Truth.

It is not the purpose of this book to enter into elaborate discussions on questions appertaining to the age, place and authenticity of the Zend-Avesta, or as to the rites and ceremonies of the Zoroastrian Religion. But I beg my reader's most particular and special attention to the three following facts in the Zoroastrian Religion, which are quite of fundamental importance ; first, that there is a Personal God, Ahura-



Mazda ; second, that man has an immortal soul ; third, that there is a future life. Upon these truths the structure of the Zoroastrian Religion rests as on an adamantine foundation. Every Zoroastrian is bound above everything to know at least these fundamental truths which form the substance of his Prophet's creed,

The statements of the Zend-Avesta in regard to the three fundamental facts and the convincing proofs which support the statements, form the subject-matter of the main portion of this book. Its third, fourth and fifth chapters deal with very important matters pertaining to the true Zoroastrian conceptions of God, the human soul and its future life. The first chapter is devoted to a brief description of the various attitudes of the present-day Parsis towards their Faith ; and the second chapter to the important features of the life of Zoroaster and of the Zend-Avesta.

From the facts presented in this volume I desire to draw attention to one general conclusion which must be a source of pride and congratulation to every Zoroastrian, whatever may be his individual belief or bias on the subject of Zoroastrianism. That conclusion is that the facts of our modern experience and observation fully and completely sustain the philosophy of Zoroaster. It is almost superfluous to remark that this can be said of no other religion on earth. It may seem to some that the conclusion is merely the product of the vagary of my imagination or of the twisting out of the shape of the real views as they are found in the Zend-Avesta. But I desire the reader not to suffer himself to be disconcerted, howsoever many there may be who hold a different opinion from that of the author. "Nothing is more contemptible than a majority," says Goethe. "A fig for your majority," echoes Schiller, "wisdom has ever dwelt with the few."

It may well be remembered that the merits of an author are judged not so much by the opinions which he holds as by

the grounds upon which he holds them, by the arguments upon which those opinions rest. An author may entertain opinions upon the most flimsy evidence. He may believe in a theory or a doctrine because he has been told that it is true or because he wants himself and others to believe it. On the other hand, there may be an author whose belief is grounded on a substantial foundation. So an author's or his work's merits should be decided not by the opinions which he holds but by the kind of evidence on which he holds them.

Although faith does not primarily rest on any human argument, evidence or proof, yet men are at liberty to make use of such arguments, evidences and proofs as are most calculated to convince a searcher after truth. The intelligent reader will agree with me that the Zoroastrian dogmas, doctrines and principles cannot be thoroughly impressed upon his mind unless they are shown to rest upon natural grounds, upon a firm scientific foundation, upon the facts of nature, upon the facts of psychic phenomena or of physical structure. The reader should bear in mind that the propositions and conclusions put before him are based on the facts that are observed, tested and recorded by authentic persons of vast experience and knowledge. The mass of facts, evidences and arguments given in this volume together with numerous quotations from the Zend-Avesta, will enable him to measure the value of our Religion by the high standard of scientific inquiry and serve to deeply impress upon his mind the important truth that the fundamental Zoroastrian dogmas, doctrines and principles are such as do not militate against true science ; that it is by a false interpretation of the facts of nature alone that they can be antagonised.

In this work I have made efforts to base my opinions, arguments and conclusions on the true interpretations of the sentences and passages quoted from the Avestan, Pahlavi and Pazend books. The sentences and passages I have quoted for my purposes from the Zend-Avesta, are not open to any other

interpretations than those I have put upon them. I have never wished to press the words of sentences beyond their veriest, plain and unquestionable meaning, a meaning as it is quite impossible to gainsay. I have all along striven to make the right use of the Zend-Avesta, and have wished to be guided by statements as they appear in the Zend-Avesta.

None can deny that it is obviously impossible within the limits of a single volume to present Scriptural evidence in support of every statement I make, but the reader may rest assured that I have never attempted to lead him outside the sacred Literature as contained in the Avesta and in our Pahlavi and Pazend Traditions.

Before concluding I must confess that I am grieved at having said things in this book tending to displease particular schools or sections within our community by harsh comment. But few men would dispute the right of the duty of a religious teacher to censure privately or in public the evils prevalent in his age amongst his coreligionists. Nothing but good can result from his pointing out and censuring the faults and failings of such of his coreligionists who forget or misconceive their sacred duty of setting a good example. His remarks and criticisms, if harsh, should give offence to no one but may well be received in the spirit in which they are made. It is necessary, I believe, to note here that where I have exposed and denounced the faults, I have done it without having any specific individual or individuals in mind.

Finally I must offer my warm thanks to my intelligent friend, Mr. Jehangir P. Pavri B. A. for carefully reading my book in manuscript and making useful suggestions.

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## ABBREVIATIONS.

Avesta	Av.	Persian	Per.
Book	Bk.	Sacred Books of	
Chapter	Chap.	the East	S. B. E.
Dâdistân-i- Dînik	Dd.	Selections	Sl.
Dînkard	Dk.	Translation	Transl.
Dastoor Darab.	D. D.	Vendîdâd	Vend.
Dastooi Pesôtan	D. P.	Volume	Vol.
Page	P.	Yasna	Ys.
Pages	Ps.	Yasht	Yt.
Pahlavi	Ph or Pahl.	Zs	Zâdsparam.
Pâzend	Pâz.		



# THE PARSI BOOK OF BOOKS

## THE ZEND-AVESTA.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### RELIGION AND THE DIFFERENT ATTITUDES OF THE PRESENT-DAY PARSIS TOWARDS IT.

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**I**N the beginning of this subject the very first question we should naturally be inclined to ask and answer, is: What is Religion? None can deny that different men take different views of Religion. Some find the object of religious veneration in the great unknowable. According to Herbert Spencer the religious sentiment must learn to seek satisfaction in the recognition of our absolute and total ignorance. "Religion," says John Stuart Mill. "is the cult of humanity, a love for mankind in general, a profound desire for all that is everywhere and supremely best."

Others look upon Religion as a mere habit of mind, something naturalised in the human being by long custom. Others again claim that true religion consists in the humdrum effort to better the physical condition of men. There are again those who trace the religious instinct in the purely animal creation. They maintain that the religion of man is as aimless as it is devoid of inward truth and corresponding objective reality as the religion of the brute.

We next come to the Deists whose teaching may be summed up in this: Man should enjoy life, obey the noble instinct of love which embraces all created things and conform to that external form of religion in which he is born and bred, provided that it does not diminish the sum of his personal

enjoyment or prove detrimental to his pocket. There is another class of men who claim that religion exercises a wholesome restraint upon the passions of the uneducated; given culture, the need for it vanishes.

The religion of some modern men and women stands for independence of thought. It lays no yoke on any man. This religion has its ethical standard which requires of man safeguard appearances and respect for conventional morality of his own day. Such are the different ways in which different classes of men look upon Religion. But they are all wrong in their views.

The true definition is the definition which is derived from the statements made in the Zend-Avesta, especially in the Gâthâs and in our important Pahlavi Book, the Dînkard. The definition is this: Religion is a disposition of the will based on the perception of truth and certain knowledge whereby man is led to recognise his dependence on God, his creator and his last end and fulfil his duty towards God, to mankind and to himself. The most necessary element of a true religion is an attitude of whole-hearted trust and love towards God which is manifested in the soul seeking its strength, help and happiness in God.

Now I should like to quote some of the passages from our inspired Zoroastrian Psalms on which the above-given definition is chiefly based: "As the first did I conceive of Thee, O Ahura-Mazda! as the One to be worshipped with the mind in the universe, as the Father of our good mind, when I beheld Thee with my own eyes as the real Maker of our righteousness, as the Lord of the actions of life."<sup>1</sup> "Him in the hymns of homage and praise would I heartily wish to adore, for now I see Him clearly, Lord of good thought, word and deed, knowing through my righteousness Him who is Ahura-Mazda"<sup>2</sup> "O Ahura! who is there for myself except Thyself and Thy Asha"<sup>3</sup> "...All prosperous states do Thou grant me in Thy love (for me). Cause my bodily and personal life to be blest with salvation

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1 S. B. E. Ys, xxxi, 8.

2 Ys, xlv, 8.

3 Ys, L, 1.



through Thy Good Mind, Excellent Power and Thy Righteous Order,"<sup>1</sup> "I know, O Mazda! that I am unable to attain my wish,.....Therefore I cry to Thee; behold it, Ahura! I desire helpful favour for myself as a friend bestows on his friend..."<sup>2</sup> "Do, O Ahura! grant gladness unto these (disciples), excellent power and the good mind by which they may attain the peaceful amenities of home and perfect happiness: of these, O Ahura-Mazda! I always thought Thee as the first Possessor!"<sup>3</sup> "That which is the best of things I beg (of Thee), O Thou Best Ahura!"<sup>4</sup> "...Give that best of all things, the glory. And do Thou reveal Thy (Will) through Thy benevolent spirit and do, Thou O Mazda, reveal Thy thoughts of wisdom through Thy good Mind which Thou hast revealed on account of Thy Righteousness....."<sup>5</sup> "(O Ahura!) what are Thy laws! What dost Thou Will?..... Speak forth so that we may listen to it (and fulfil Thy Commandments)....."<sup>6</sup> "O Ahura! Thou revealest to me the religious precepts and laws of the Saoshyants, through which man becomes the doer of good deeds and thrives on account of his righteousness"<sup>7</sup> "He (Ahura) is the most discerning Judge; so let His Will, whatever it be, be done."<sup>8</sup> ".....That I will do which Thou said, was best."<sup>9</sup> "O you men! You learn these religious laws which Ahura gave in our happiness and in sorrow (to help us). You learn what are the long lasting sufferings for the sinful and what are the blessings for the holy ....."<sup>10</sup> "Let Righteousness fully and perfectly thrive or triumph..... In the whole kingdom (of Ahura) let piety (ârmaitî) make its (permanent) abode and let her ....give bliss for our (good) deeds."<sup>11</sup>

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1 S. B. E. vol. xxxi. Ys. xxxiii. 10.

2 Ys. xlii. 2.

3 Ys. xxix. 10.

4 Ys. xxviii. 9.

5 Ys. xlii. 2.

6 Ys. xxxiv. 12.

7 Ys. xxxiv. 13.

8 Ys. xxix. 4.

9 Ys. xlii. 13.

10 Ys. xxx. 11.

11 Ys. xlii. 16.

From these few quotations out of many contained in the Gāthās, we learn that Religion in a comprehensive sense includes a belief in the being and perfection of God—in the revelation of His Will or Law to men—in man's obligation to obey His Will—in his accountableness to God—in a state of reward and punishment—and in true piety of life with the practice of all moral duties.

"The good Religion is one," says the saintly author of the Dinkard, "which is in correspondence with the intuitive reason; it possesses every degree of embellished wisdom, it is the interpreter of superior knowledge..... possessing the noblest system of morals.....and its chief object is to make its professor an extoller of the Deity, to keep him in obedience to Him, in union with the Being.....It is the very abode of piety and the source of graceful authority. And the faithful thereby are enabled to reform their habits and to strengthen their common sense and to propagate the glory.....And the fidelity of the mass of the people to that religion is the precursor of a time of happiness. Herein exist the institutions of the priest, the warrior, the farmer and the artisan, the worship of Ahura Mazda, piety and other good qualities.."¹ Thus, according to the Zend-Avesta Religion is the outcome of a positive knowledge of God, which is the spontaneous product of man's spiritual faculties and experiences. It is based on the sure and certain apprehension of reality. It is no day dream of a supernatural world which every one is at liberty to construct for himself as best suits his own predilections and temperamental needs.

Undoubtedly, the Zoroastrian Religion reveals a definite God, a definite Law-giver, a definite Law, a definite system of morality; imposes definite duties and definite obligations

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¹ Dr. D. P. B. Sanjana's Transl. Dk, Vol. v, P. 293.

and praises or censures definite modes of life, as we shall see later on in detail. For it is necessary to believe not merely in a God in general supposed to be perfect in one way or another—in a revelation of whose subject matter we are ignorant—in an obligation merely in the abstract—in an accountableness which is indefinite—but to believe in a definite God with definite perfection, in a definite revelation of His will, in definite obligations and duties; for thus only can we practise definite virtues and lead a truly pious life.

A mere general and indefinite belief in some God or another, in some obligation or another, can never lead to any determined course of action, much less supply us with a standard by which we can regulate our lives and call them godly. Definiteness in all these points is a necessary condition for practical action; for while they remain indefinite and undetermined, our minds and wills can never attain to any degree of definiteness.

What are we to think of a form of morality in which the profession of a religion is a mere matter of expediency, of a morality in which religion is like suits of clothes to be changed in adaptation of time, place, business or health, curiosity or pleasure with a variety in fancy and fashion? Murder, drunkenness, and debauchery measured by such a standard would be as proper to human nature as honesty, sobriety, temperance and other virtues. It should therefore be fully borne into mind that we cannot make the important elements of our religion indefinite and uncertain without destroying the force of obligation.

Religion differs from science and scientific knowledge in this that Religion does not merely illumine our understanding with the light of reason but it also animates and strengthens the will, impelling it freely to embrace its true end and direct its effort to attain that end. "I bow before

Ahura, the Omniscient Lord, who has sent through Zarathushtra Spitama....., the wisdom of the religion, worthy of faith through natural intelligence and scientific knowledge.....wisdom that is the best for the guidance of all persons, who are, were and will be.....O Lord protector! in obedience to thy command I am firm in the pure religion and I promise to think, speak and do every righteous act.....I keep my conduct pure and in accordance with Thy wishes keep uncontaminated the six powers of the soul, work, speech, thought, reasoning, memory and intellect.....and in order to obtain the riches of the next world through good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, worship Thee that I may thus open (for myself) the path to the shining paradise.....”<sup>1</sup> “As he (man) is almost submissive and obedient to the religion, so the religion has supreme authority over him. His creed is the creed of the religion, his desire is the desire of the religion and his acts, the acts of religion.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus, then, as we have seen just above, the demand for a truly spiritual religion is a fundamental demand of human nature: “O Mazda! reveal to me the worthy aims of our Religion so that I may fulfil them...”<sup>3</sup> “.....Do Thou, O Spenta—Armaiti show me the religious laws through the Righteous Order.”<sup>4</sup> “The way which Thou declarest as the way of the Good Mind, O Ahura! is made up of the religious precepts and truths of the Saoshyants by which the doer of good deeds thrive with his righteousness.....”<sup>5</sup> “That abundant satisfaction and joy which (Thou) hast bestowed through Thy (bountiful) Spirit upon those who love and struggle for the (good) Religion, do Thou declare so that we may know it and may make men believers.”<sup>6</sup>

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1 D. P. Vol. ii, P. 104.

2 D. P. Vol. vi, P. 363.

3 Ys. xxxiii. 8.

4 Ys. xxxiii. 13.

5 Ys. xxxiv. 13.

6 Ys. xxxi. 3.

"O Mazda! he who keeps his mind to that which is better and more holy, pursues the Daênâ (Dîn) close in word and deed. His will and wish must be in harmony with his chosen creed..."<sup>1</sup> "Through the coming of religion we have perfect enjoyment and owing to religion our praise-worthy spiritual life arrives in readiness....and the glory of the soul."<sup>2</sup> All these Gathic passages and many others strongly impress on us the fact that human nature always craves for the satisfaction of its religious instinct.

Indeed, Religion is natural to man. When we survey man's various faculties, affections and powers, we find that they all concur in bearing testimony to this truth. Let us first search into our Reason. What primitive ideas does Reason convey? They are verily the ideas which lead to God such as is represented in the Zend-Avesta. What is the earliest inquiry of our Reason? It is into causes which lead to the first and supreme Cause as is represented in Ahura-Mazda.

Next let us take the case of our Conscience. Conscience is another spiritual faculty tending to religious belief. This principle of our nature does not only enjoin on us a law of duty but it also intimates that there is a ruler above us. Conscience does not speak to us as an independent guide but as a delegate of some higher Legislator. Its convictions of right and wrong are accompanied with the idea of an authority more awful than man's which decrees and enforces the distinctions between right and wrong. That this is the natural suggestion of Conscience, we gather from the fact that men of all ages, countries and conditions have invariably agreed in speaking of the inward monitor as the voice of the Divinity. In approving or condemning our thoughts and actions we do not feel that we alone are the judges but we have an inward presentiment of our standing before another Tribunal.

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1 Ys. xlviii, 4.

2 Dd. Chap. V. 5.

There is besides another affection which bears testimony to our being born for religion. I refer to the emotion which leads us to revere what is higher than ourselves, to wonder at the incomprehensible, to admire the vast, to adore the majestic. There is in human nature an affinity with what is mighty, an awful delight in what is sublime. It was this emotion that attracted Zoroaster and his followers to the sublime scenes of nature. And it is the same emotion that attracts us, true Zoroastrians, to such scenes as those of the seas, of the sun and the moon, of the mountains of the stars, of the fire and so forth.

Religion is therefore not an unnatural good. Its germs exist in man. Man has the spiritual eye to see, the mind to know, the heart to love, the will to obey God. So man's disposition chiefly depends on his religion.<sup>1</sup> Man should improve his disposition, cultivate this spiritual nature and enjoy the spiritual illumination which is his glorious privilege, by means of firm reliance on his good Religion.<sup>2</sup>

After our spiritual faculties and affections let us consult our Scriptures and ask: What principle did all ancient legislators appeal to as the foundation of civil and political institutions? What principle has acted with great force on human affairs? And our Scriptures forthwith answer: It was the principle of Religion. "For every person there is an object which is more honourable and dear to him than anything else.....That thing is Religion."<sup>3</sup> "Whosoever turns his virtuous face to Religion and embellishes one's nature, then unto that person Religion reveals a thousand truths"<sup>4</sup> "Religion is that which creates happiness unto every person"<sup>5</sup> "The (primitive) kings and satraps ruled by virtue of their Religion, and suppressed injury from

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol iv, P. 213.

4 Ibid P, 17,

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 346,

5 Ibid P, 11.

3 D. D. P. Sanjana's Transl. Dk. Vol. x,  
Bk. vi, P's, 10 and 11.

among their subjects and improved and civilized their countries by dint of their standard Faith, refined them by the help of the just doctrines of the same primitive Faith of Mazda-worship which inculcated devotion to the Deity.' The supreme Faith and the highest acts of righteousness described in the Religion of Zarathushtra Spitama were made current by the primitive kings from time to time, by means of the Mazda-Yasnian Religion they carried on their sovereignty on good principles, embellished the world and exalted their subjects through virtuous practices.....''<sup>1</sup> Thus these quotations from our authentic Book, the Dinkard, tell us the fact that Religion is the central and all-pervading principle of our human nature. They tell us also that we all possess in an equal degree the capacity for imbuing religion and that to give it life and vigour, cultivate it to the highest pitch and to make it supreme in conformity with the Law of Ahura-Mazda, should be our highest aim and object.

After having received the answer from our Scriptures let us turn to History and ask the question: Is Religion natural to man? History also convinces us of the fact that man has always and everywhere tended to a religious belief. In history no people appears without a positive faith, without temples or priesthood, that is to say, without a constituted religion. That is a fact of experience scientifically ascertained.

The immense masses of mankind throughout the world have been found in all ages within the reach of religious influence. Persia, Egypt, Babylon, China, Japan, and the great Indo-European Family all possess sufficient religion. In comparison with these the scattered savage tribes that have seemed to have no religion or to know no God, are relatively insignificant,

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk, Vol, vi. P. 272.

"The statement," says E. Tiele, "That there are tribes and nations which possess no religion, rests either on inaccurate observation or on a confusion of ideas. No tribe or nation has yet been met with destitute of belief in any higher beings; and travellers who asserted their existence, have been afterwards refuted by facts. It is legitimate therefore to call religion in its most general sense an universal phenomenon of humanity."

All intelligent people have creeds; and these relate to all departments of their human life: Political creeds, such as the theories about tariff, finance, civil service, government; social creeds, such as those theories which relate to manners and customs of society; aesthetical creeds about beauty and styles of ornamentation; religious creeds, such as the theories about the Deity, the soul, the great future and so forth. The only being that has no creeds about anything, is the idiot. To scoff against creeds is to betray signs of profound ignorance.

For a man to prosper in the world, he must be religious<sup>1</sup> and what is true of an individual is also true of all communities and nations. We find Plato asserting that the very foundations of human society are undermined by him who seeks to oust religion. While Plutarch avers that it is easier to build a city in the air than to impart stability to a society which disclaims belief in the supernatural. Napoleon prohibited the dissemination of anti-religious works for the reason, as he alleged:—"I do not feel myself strong enough to govern a nation which reads Rousseau and Voltaire."

"In 1901 the part played by some of the religious orders in France in an agitation served as leading motive in the dissolution and expulsion of the majority of those

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1 Ys. xlix, 5; D. P. Dk. Vol. I, P. 29; Vol. V. Ps. 306, 310 and 320;



religious bodies. The ultra-radical and anti-clerical Ministry of M. Combes seized the opportunity offered by fresh pretensions to effect the severance of the State from the Church. State aid and State patronage were withdrawn from the Church. It went on so for thirteen years. But in the beginning of the war the popular attitude changed and public opinion was shocked by the working of the anti-religious ministry in Russia. And it was confidently predicted that the French Government would resume its diplomatic relations with the Vatican which were broken off as an incident of the severance. Finally both sides gained by an understanding. And now the middle classes of France are a little more hopeful of the power of Rome to act as a brake on the morality of the people."

Mr. Tokonomi, the Vice-Minister of home affairs in Japan some years ago made a tour of investigation in England and America and returned with the conviction that the Anglo-Saxon ideas of religion had much to do with the loyalty of the British and American nations. He pointed out that in America where there was no connection between the State and the Church, the State was openly in full sympathy with the Church and used it for the promotion of the peace and prosperity of its country. Mr. Tokonomi claimed that if religion exerted a moral force on a nation, the government should take account of religion. He believed that there would be no Japanese loyalty without spirituality and faith in unseen forces and contended that that was impossible without religion. At the present day the children of the national schools of Japan are under instructions from the authorities to visit the national shrines on holidays and to perform acts of devotion.

With such evidences before us who would gainsay that if spiritual faith or religion has been found nationally beneficial and essential to such enlightened and advanced

nations as the English, the Americans, the French and the Japanese, it ought to be equally so to our Zoroastrian Community? "Be it known," says the Dinkard, "that the life of citizens consists in civil government (being) connected with religion and religion being connected with civil government. And the exposition based on a knowledge of the good religion, regarding it is thus:.....(If there be) those whose government is for (the purpose of) religion and whose religion is for the improvement of government,-then, the faithful must assuredly live in accord with them; for, the rule of such a state is like a manifest support to the doers of generous deeds of the good religion, for remaining firm in the service of Ahura-Mazda and for conferring greatness on the religion. For one not to destroy another, to render obedience to the State and confer greatness upon it.....(all) these are owing to the remaining in obedience to the religion of Ahura-Mazda. The highest greatness to religion is from (civil) government. There is a great splendour and profit to the people of the world from God, owing to the influence of religious behaviour. A government is truthful owing to its being a government accompanied with the good religion. A government is related to the good religion owing to their being a complete connection with the good religion. And from this, the proposition that government is identical with religion and that religion is the government of citizens, is clearly apparent....."<sup>1</sup> ".....The Creator Ahura-Mazda produced good government for effecting the protection of the creatures.....Good government is that which maintains and directs a province flourishing, the poor untroubled.....keeps in progress the ceremonial of the sacred beings, duties and good works. It causes friendliness and pleading for the poor and delivers up itself and even that which is its own life for the sake of the

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. I. Ps. 54 and 55.

good Religion of the Mazda-worshippers. And if there be any one who desists from the way of the sacred beings, then it orders some one to effect his restoration thereto;.....and brings him back to the way of the sacred beings.....and delivers up the body for the sake of the soul. A good king who is of that kind, is called equal to angles and archangels.”<sup>1</sup> “O Ahura!.....” exclaims our inspired Gâthic poet, “the holy Religion can bring prosperity to my lands where people follow the Religion and its righteous laws.....”<sup>2</sup> “The Mazdayasnian Religion” says the author of the Dînkard, “is to make the world prosperous.”<sup>3</sup> Both our Scriptures as well as our historical records testify to the fact that the Zoroastrian Religion has proved beneficial not only to our Zoroastrian race but to the world.

Dear Zoroastrians! remember the part which our Zoroastrian Religion has played in the civilization and reformation of the world and in the development and advancement of our own illustrious race and you will associate with me in my conviction that our Religion should be the chief factor in the higher education of our community. Through its vitalising force Zoroastrianism has played a conspicuous part through the entire past—from as far back as history records—and has proved itself at all times to be the prompter and promoter of good actions and of benevolent institutions.

We have a history which, I feel, we have the right to legitimately boast of. We have the history of our remote forefathers who once formed a mighty nation, the nation that ruled over the vastest Empire the world has ever seen, the Empire which extended from the Euphrates and the Tigris down to the Aegean Sea and the Nile and in which the seeds of

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1 Mînôî Khîrad Chap. X, 14-26.

3 D. P. Dk, Vol. V. P. 310.

2 Ys, xliv, 10.

Zoroastrian principles and precepts were deeply sown and widely spread by our mighty Zoroastrian kings, heroes and their travelling spiritual ministers.

Our ancient history is illumined by the names of such most illustrious kings, heroes, ministers, saints and sages, as Vistâsp, Zairivairi,—Zoroaster, Jâmâsp, Farshaoster, Medhyô-mâh, Ardeshir-Bâbakân Shâpûr, Noshirwân Kobâd, Khusro Parwiz, Tosar, Ardâvîrâf, Aderbâd Mahrespend, Aderfernabag and others whose foremost claims to our constant remembrance and to our highest esteem and reverence, lie now as always, in the invaluable services they rendered by striking for the world a new and enlightened path of progress and perfection.

Nor are our later and more recent annals lacking in names of distinguished men, men distinguished in the commercial world, men of high repute in medical and legal professions, men of leading position in literary and political circles, men devoted to religious researches and investigations, men of far sighted wisdom and liberality who rose to exceptional eminence by their notable services to their community and country.

Now I would gladly avail myself of this opportunity to declare that during my lecturing tour in Europe, America and India I was extremely delighted to find that the Parsis, either as residents or as travellers, had been treated with great consideration, that they met with uniform courtesy from men of all nations and communities; that they were considered as the embodiment of honesty, loyalty and charity and were looked upon as a very enlightened and most sympathetic race that loved to live in harmony and friendship, in peace and good will with the people of all casts and creeds.

As it is well known, the Parsis are held in great regard and affection by their ruling nation who highly appreciate their immunity from their racial and religious animosity and

the purposes in the advancement and civilization in the country in which they live. Such high regard and appreciation are indeed a glowing tribute to Parsi character which, I think, we must acknowledge with pride. Such is, in a word, our history, past and present.

May I now inquire what it was that worked so deep and beneficently in the thought and life of the personages whom I have mentioned by their names as also of the entire community for all periods of their history? It is a fair answer to this question to say that it was the spirit of Zoroaster and his Religion that had penetrated into our as our ancestors' hearts and souls.<sup>1</sup> It was thier faith in their religion that sustained them in every adversity and filled them with a pride and hope which have continued upto our own times to be a vitalising force in the social and religious character of their faithful descendants.

It is this self same spirit of the Religion of Zoroaster that exercises its whole-some influence in manifold ways on our present Zoroastrians. It is this spirit which enables them to refrain from violence under provocation, to suppress injustice and oppression, to extend symathy in distress, to evince loyalty to rulers, and patriotism to their country. It is this same spirit which instils in them the principles of rectitude so that they may live in the world soberly and righteously. We, a handful of men, should have been by this time nowhere if this spirit had ceased to work within us. It would be rank folly to pull down under false notion of reform our old social and religious institutions and usages which have served from century to century to induce in us so much strength and vigour and sustained us as a progressing, civilized and prosperous community.

So let our chief pride be in adding to the greatness and glory of our illustrious race and its religion. Let our fervent prayer be that we and generations coming

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. VI, P. 372,

after us may pursue, preserve and promote, with unflagging zeal and diligence, the purity of our Religion and the prosperity and progress of our race. Augmentation rather than depletion of our Faith ought to be the guiding motive of our life and activities. Let us all ever pray in the words of our Zoroastrian psalmist: ".....O Mazda! with the tongue of Thy mouth, do Thou speak that I may make all men believers!"<sup>1</sup> "Now I beseech of you, O Mazda! what lies within your will.....that I may discern aright how we may proclaim the pure Religion which is Thy own Faith, O Ahura! = Eresh vichdhyâi yathâf srâvayaêmâ tâm daênâm yâ khshâmâvatô ahurâ,"<sup>2</sup>

Now we will proceed to philosophy and see how it supports and confirms all the above-given testimonies in regard to our urgent need of our Religion. "I have been young," says a philosopher, "and now I am old and maintain that I have never found solid, vigorous and enduring morality anywhere save amongst those who fear God."

Even the naturalist Huxley felt constrained to write, "I have been seriously perplexed to know by what practical measures the religious feeling which is the essential basis of conduct, can be kept up." It would be difficult indeed to rival Huxley in his definition of the influence of religion as "the essential basis of conduct."

Religion is the prime motive, the fountain source of morality "The Religion of Dâdâr," says the saintly author of the Dînkard, "is (ordained) for the performance of good actions...Devotion, protection of the poor,.....and many other truly meritorious actions as well as the gifts pertaining thereto, are the results of the good religion whereby the people who are obedient unto God, are said to be of the good ways or principles. "Man ought to believe in the good religion which is the source of piety, that he may exalt himself through righteousness."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxxi, 3,      <sup>2</sup> Ys. xlix, 6,      <sup>3</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. v, Ps. 345 and 304,

It is true that there are other aids to virtue besides religion:—the approbations and rebukes of conscience, the esteem and opinion of fellow creatures, the direct recompenses of good deeds and upright conduct. But that watchful discipline over the inmost thoughts and motives, that aspiration after inward purity, that preference for the soul's betterment to worldly interests—all of which are so essential to the eminence and perfection of the soul—come not from ourselves but from a higher source. They require continual fresh impetus of Divine Inspiration which nothing supplies except a sublime religion, and one such pre-eminently is Zoroastrianism as the Zend-Avesta justly declares: "As high as Heaven is above the earth that it encompasses around, so high above all other utterances is this Law, the daêva-destroying Law of Zarathushtra."<sup>1</sup> "That Law (is) the manifestations of goodness (and) is the pre-eminent one in this world."<sup>2</sup> "The Law of Zarathushtra is the truest giver of all the good that is the offspring of the good principle (in man)."<sup>3</sup> "Be it known that of the many evidences of the Mazdayasnian Law being the word of God these three are chief: First, that it contains perfect wisdom. Second, that it contains more of the truth than other faiths. Third, that to him who is anxious about religion, it gives a complete knowledge about the existence of God. The reason for accepting the Mazdayasnian Law is respect for Divine Wisdom. The excellence of Divine Wisdom is made known by the words of this Faith."<sup>4</sup> Let us therefore all pray with the saintly author of yasna LX, 2-3: "May with these the long-lasting pre-eminence of this Law of Ahura's, the Zarathushtrian Faith, approach us."

The common saying is that where there is a multitude of people, there is also confusion and discord. But this ought only to be true of a multitude that is without the

<sup>1</sup> Vend. V. 25.

<sup>2</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. x, P. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Yt. xi, 3.

<sup>4</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, Ps. 458 and 467.

approach of such a good Law or Religion as Zoroastrianism. What greater hell can one imagine than that state of perpetual strife and conflict in which we find people who are divided on a matter of such supreme importance to them as religion? One of the effective means for keeping a community welded in harmony and union is to insist on it a scrupulous observance of all that its religion enjoins. "In whosoever person good religion exists, he is devoid of doing mischief unto others."<sup>1</sup> "The friends of religion are good friends and, therefore, also providers of fame for both of them."<sup>2</sup> A common religion signifies a common ideal; where there is unity in conformation to that ideal, there is unity too among its adherents. Religion was the bond that in our ancient Fatherland, Iran, linked together our forefathers of yore; and this is the bond that shall bind us together now and for ever.

A society without certain belief is divided by a thousand opinions into as many sects and sections, each claiming truth for its side of views and disowning others of opposite convictions. Such division spells ruin to the dissenting minorities as well to the main body—the nation or the community—of which they are the component parts. One such glaring instance is provided to us in the great Hindoo community of our country split up as it is, by reason of divergence of views and customs, into myriads of small sects to the detriment of their entire body as a nation. It is very regrettable that in spite of the lessons of ruin wrought before our own eyes our Parsis, setting aside their time-honoured ancestral beliefs and practices, have adopted a tendency towards divergence in religious matters.

It is a sin to divide a race against itself. Let us recall an instance from history of the Jewish nation of yore. What was it that razed their temples to the dust and

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol, vi, P. 365,

<sup>2</sup> Dd. Chap. xlvii, 10,



scattered their nation like chaff before the wind? It was their proud separation from their own race. Will not a similar spirit bring a similar ruin upon us, Zoroastrians?

A true religion is like a lake wide and glorious, the lake of Divine solace and salvation:—"Be it known that the good revelation is the elixir of life.....The removal of the diseases pertaining to the soul,.....is effected by means of the good religion.<sup>1</sup>

How sad and intolerable is the lot of those who have no religious convictions to help them in the hour of adversity? Men and women have all got their own lot of troubles and anxieties. They can never escape the struggle of life. Even the prosperous are not without their share of difficulties. It is hard as it were to tell who undergo more bitter trial—the prosperous or the obscure? For as soon as success is achieved that attracts attention, there break loose the forces of envies and jealousies like hounds from their kennels.

On the other hand, the depressed and the poor have no less troubles to undergo in life. Some have the burden of business over-weighing them, pestered and worried in life; there are others who bow down under the load of poverty, loathed and persecuted for their bare means. Others, the unhappiest of all are the bereaved, who mourn the loss of some departed kinsman or friend. Meet where you may ten men and nine out of the ten need your consolation. Now it is some trouble with health, now some domestic affliction that demands sympathy. And yet much of the world's sympathy amounts at best to nothing absolutely. All the music of the world cannot drown the wail of the human heart.

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 394 and Vol. iv, P. 222.

Is there no relief then for such souls? Why so many people are without happiness, without real comfort at all? Chiefly because they forget that fretfulness and discontent are the worst poison and religion is their best antidote. A man with one lung but with God for the desideratum is better off than a godless man with two lungs. Man must strive for and receive Divine companionship and sympathy. Such is suggested and offered by religion. The Zend-Avesta promises them in these words: "His kinsman, his co-operator, his obedient and evil men (all) pray (for our ruin and death). But in my mind is the delight or joy (derived through the friendship) of Ahura-Mazda..."<sup>1</sup> "I know this, Mazda! why I am unable to attain my wish.....I humbly put before Thee my petition; behold it, O Lord! I desire your helpful grace for me, as a friend bestows on his friend....."<sup>2</sup> "By the close relationship with God there is protection by God and by the protection of God man attains to both kinds of excellence, of this world and of that world."<sup>3</sup>

In abuse of that liberty which civilized governments extend to their subjects, men in our community as in others think themselves free to discard religion and substitute in its place a system of heresies out of their own distorted vision and imagination. Such is the spectacle which the history of the world unceasingly presents. At whatever epoch history is consulted, it will speak of a constant struggle between the two parties, the party of faith and the party of unbelief. Between the two, the believers have always survived the unbelievers, as they shall, now and always. Theirs is a spiritual force which none shall ever destroy neither ages, kings, nor sages. This party of God outlives the stratagems and persecutions of its opponents. The victory is always theirs because their inspiration is derived from their trust in God.

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<sup>1</sup> S. B. E. Vol. xxxi. Ys. xxxii. 1.

<sup>3</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 356.

<sup>2</sup> Ys, xlv. 2.

The world, we admit, is never without its unbelievers; but it must be admitted also that they have never succeeded to destroy the universality and perpetuity of religious worship amongst men. On the other hand, whilst the unbelievers have never acquired universality for themselves; they have never attained even to the honour of nationality.

The unbelievers suppose that the human race has from time to time fallen victim to a certain number of imposters who have played upon its credulity and abused its good faith. They think that, primarily, man had for his prophet only his reason; for worship, only his heart. In pre-prophetic ages there was no altar, no worship, no priesthood. They believe themselves capable without these of maintaining order and peace on earth. They call religious belief a delusion and associate its origin with the misinterpretation of dreams, meteorological ignorance, the dread of animals, the love of ancestors and what not.

We admit that these various influences have affected uncivilized men; but we must also admit the incontrovertible fact that civilized philosophy has been notoriously at a loss to create a religion. Is it possible then to believe that savage philosophy succeeded in a task which civilized philosophy has so completely failed to accomplish?

To the holder of liberalism religion presents itself in the light of a foolish superstition as is doomed to die out. The chief responsibility for the spread of the so-called liberal sentiments is chargeable to that insatiable egotism which Godless materialism induces and to the disappearance of religious sentiments from the hearts of people.

Under the cloak of liberty so called, men have often been summoned together to take their share in a battle against reason and right. How shamefully do the apostles of liberty abuse this noble word to cloak the most degraded

and miserable servitude? No word is more abused and misinterpreted than this word—Liberty.

Here it is very necessary to note that the first, foremost and the sincerest apostles of true liberty were Zoroaster and his immediate disciples. It was they who first conveyed to man's mind the true idea of liberty and its true meaning. They did in no sense curtail the just liberty of man which his thinking mind claims for itself and of which the sacred author thus speaks in yasna XXX:— "And now I will herald forth, O you who are beseeching to be taught! those remarkable things which appertain to Mazda, the praises which are for Ahura... "Hear you all with your ears; see with the bright light of your (own) enlightened mind. Every man should decide and choose for himself his faith or religion. ".....There are the two primal spirits.. ...a better thing.....and a worse as to thought, word and action. Let the wise choose aright between these two (spirits or principles)....."<sup>1</sup> "(O Mazda), do Thou tell me so that I may discern and choose a better thing given through my righteousness and ponder on and know through my good mind the truths....."<sup>2</sup>; "Now I have been an enquirer everywhere for understanding the sacred being, as written above, fervent minded in the investigation of his religion and will; as likewise I have wandered for the sake of investigation—to many different races. Because, as to religion, I did not admire that which was in supremacy, but I sought that which was more steadfast and more acceptable in wisdom and testimony. I went also into association with many different races, until a time when owing to the compassion of the sacred beings and the strength, glory, and power of the good religion, I escaped from much gloomy depth and ill-solvable doubt."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxx 1—3.

<sup>2</sup> Ys. xxxi. 5.

<sup>3</sup> S. B. E. vol. xxiv Sikand Gûmânîk  
Vigâr chap. x. 43—49.

According to these quotations from the Zend-Avesta a man is at liberty to work out his own conviction as it pleases him, but they must be in conformity with truth and not in accordance with his individual temperament or whim. A man may, if he so chooses, assume that his convictions in conformity with his individual temperament or whim are true. Such assumption is unworthy and the offspring of vanity. It robs him of the happiness which is only to be found in the domain of truth.

Again the passages quoted above teach us that liberty is good so far as it is a deliverance from evil and from that which acts as an impediment to good. In a word, true liberty frees and delivers us from all that disturb or impede our highest happiness and qualifies us for every thing that is conducive to that happiness. This highest happiness according to our Yasna XXX, 4, consists in Vahishtem-Manô, that is, in the Best Mental State, that is, in the state of the mind in which the mind is most free from all sorts of evil, that state which enables man to become a companion of Ahura-Mazda, to become like Him (thwâvâs) who is the Highest Good Mainyus-Spenishta.<sup>1</sup>

Alike to the cloak of liberty there are, so to say, other cloaks; the cloak of tolerance, of brotherhood and of humanitarianism,—in the cover whereof a man may use high-sounding phrases about human dignity and so forth and yet fling his fellow-men in the mud.

Besides these cloaks there is the more frequently used cloak of science. Under the pretext of science some of the grossest errors have been pressed upon us for our acceptance. Some Parsis discard everything in religion for which no experimental evidence can be adduced as demanded in science.

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1 Ys. I. 1, xlv. 1 and 2,

If an idea or institution is found wanting when weighed in the scale of science, they advocate its rejection; but if, on the other hand, it stands scientific scrutiny, they advocate its continuance. To such Parsis who exalt science as arbiter veritates, the following illustration would be an eye-opener.

Modern science teaches that the sun is many millions of miles away from the earth; also that the earth revolves round the sun. But only a few centuries ago persons of certainly no less intelligence than ourselves with exactly the same facts before them believed that the sun was a lamp set in the heavens and that this lamp moved across from pole to pole once every day. Similarly, in the middle ages when a man was taken ill, it was the custom to declare that he was possessed of seven devils. Nowadays we diagnose him to be in the grip of "seven million streptococci." One might, in view of these facts, be pardoned for believing that the scientific truth of to-day is the error of to-morrow.

The fundamental principle in these contentions against religious truths of the class of Parsis aforesaid is that knowledge is restricted to what are called phenomena, to those things which are capable of being apprehended by the senses. Hence, as religion deals mainly with spiritual verities and pertains primarily to the spiritual nature of man, they put it aside as something with which they need have but little to do; because they say, it may have no substantial existence; it may be nothing but a product of men's fancies; it is not supported on any solid foundation. But may I ask whether the ultimate principles and premises of any science have any better foundation?

A sceptic reasons thus. Man sees in his mind some-things which he calls ideas, some secondary and deduced, and others primordial which constitute the inscrutable foundation of his reason. All the final conclusions of the mind flow

from the primary ideas. Now every man of science must confess and does confess that it is impossible to demonstrate the primary ideas which form the intimate substance of our reason. If they could be demonstrated, they would not be primitive; others would be so and the same difficulty would arise in regard to them. We, men, with our finite or limited mind can demonstrate only that which is a consequence and not that which is a principle. An effort to demonstrate the primary ideas in the human mind is an effort against the human nature, which terminates only in self-deception. "If," said Sage Pascal, "there is an impossibility of proving, which is invincible to all dogmatism, there is an impossibility of doubting, which is invincible to all pyrrhonism."• Indeed, it may be said that there is nothing to reply to scepticism; because there is nothing to reply to those who make objects of doubt their own ideas, convictions, words and their own very doubts.

What are all the fantastic theories of modern philosophy but the product of morbid scepticism? There are some people who question the validity of all knowledge attainable by human reason; others who mistrust the whole content of sense experience; there are others who doubt everything except what concerns their own interest. Scepticism is an evil spirit which lies in ambush to rob man of his peace and happiness. So man should refrain himself from captious splitting of hairs for he gains nothing thereby. "He who is without doubt in his pure and good Religion of the Mazda-worshippers, arrives most in Heaven."<sup>1</sup>

Unreasoning doubt is as much the offspring of superficial thinking as is unreasoning credulity. There is such a thing as reasonable doubt. "Doubt, which springs from

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<sup>1</sup> Dīnāi-Manōi Khrat, S. B. E. Vol. xxiv, Ps. 73 and 74.

a real desire to know," says Kano Fisher, "opens up the way to conviction and true liberty of thought. Through the medium of such doubt as this the will speaks truth. On the other hand, doubt which is born of the sceptical habit, leads to free thought."

Let us suppose that like the animals we knew nothing but what we could see with our own eyes and feel with our senses and instincts. Again let us suppose that there was no such thing as faith in the world, no belief of men in each other. Let us imagine there exists such a state of things. If there be no such thing as faith or belief, the knowledge of every man would be limited to his own knowledge. But what a poor shrunken thing our mind would be without the help of human faith and what a narrow circle our slow-paced mind would move in?

The limits of man's knowledge are soon reached. He cannot know everything. It is a great fact that there are many things in this world that, to speak in the words of Lord Dundreary, "no fellow can find out." To speak in Mr. Spencer's words: "The Power which the universe manifests to us, is utterly inscrutable. In its ultimate essence nothing can be known."

At every turn man finds himself compelled to rely on the conclusions which others have reached. Man lives by faith; his opportunities for verification are limited. In the main he believes and trusts. Many shallow groundless theories are propounded by many godless philosophers from day to day and thousands of men are found ready to believe them. They put their implicit faith in them. Why, then, should a Zoroastrian hesitate to believe in what his prophet, his ancient saints and sages, believed and said?

There is a peculiar peril in the religious conflicts of our day. It lies in the fact that the powers of darkness have set up their standard in the very field of science, and



are seeking to turn it into a weapon of offence against religion and God.

There is no lack of Parsis among us who are prepared to barter their religion for their personal comfort under the guise of science, culture and virtue but within they are despisers of truth and of every restraint which belief, morality and honour seek to impose upon man.

This class of Parsi progressives blow and destroy our faith with the musketry of their shibboleths and sneers, attack our dogmas, pooh-pooh our doctrines and make light of ceremonies, rites and customs. They yearn for their overthrow, caricature and assail them with misrepresentation and derision. They sweep their religion aside as though it was a tissue of speculations and they treat it as such because ordinary evidence does not apply to it. Their position is as absurd as that of the man who one night stood by the side of the astronomer and looking skyward, said: "I can count one hundred stars off there in that region." "Yes," said the astronomer, "there are many, but how many more?" "No more than I can see and count," said the man. "Give me a little time till I look closely. Wait now and I will count them all." "But," said the astronomer, "there are many more than you can see. If you can count each one that is visible to your eyes, there are still more." "How can there be many more than I can see?" the man persistently asked. "I will not believe in the existence of those I cannot see with my own eyes." At once the astronomer placed his telescope before his eyes and asked him to look through it. The sceptic saw through the telescope hundreds and thousands of stars more than he could see with his own naked eyes.

A sceptic Parsi once said to me "I will not believe anything I cannot explain." "Indeed," I said, "you will not believe anything you cannot explain? Please explain to me why

some cows have horns and others have no horns." "No" said the sceptic, "I did not mean that exactly, I mean that I will not believe anything I have not seen." "Indeed," I said, "you will not believe anything you have not seen? Are not there numberless things you do not understand, which you cannot explain, and cannot see and yet you believe them? You believe in the law of gravitation and yet you cannot explain nor can you see it. I can ask a hundred questions about your eyes, ears, face, finger-nails that you cannot answer. Yet you find fault with your religion because your questions to me about some of its dogmas, doctrines, rites and ceremonies, cannot be answered to your satisfaction."

Scepticism, agnosticism or atheism is a religion of "Don't know." "Is there a God?" "I don't know." "Is the soul immortal?" "I don't know." The religion of "Don't know" is the substitute for the religion of "I know" Scepticism, agnosticism, atheism, infidelity or a religion of terrible negatives is what our Scriptures severely condemn but some of our modern Parsis try to substitute for our Zoroastrian Religion of glorious positives which show us a world of hope, strength, victory and joy: "This is an unbeliever," says our Zoroastrian saint in the Vîstâsp Yasht, "let us throw him down below....."<sup>1</sup> ".....An adult is worthy of death on account of his having abandoned the good Religion....."<sup>2</sup> "The opponent of the Religion is scepticism and non-Arianism, its ally is apostasy..."<sup>3</sup> "And one was he by whom the religion of apostates was preferred .....to the law which the righteous has praised to that existence which would have procured a complete remedy, and would have become the eternity of the records which bestow salvation, through the good righteousness which is owing to the pure Religion, the best knowledge."<sup>4</sup>

1 Yt. xxiv, 44 and Vend I. 8.

2 Dd, xli, 3.

3 D D. Sanjana's Dk. Vol. xi. P. 95,

4 S. B. E. Vol. xviii, Dd, lxxii, 8-9.

Suppose that scepticism, agnosticism, atheism or infidelity triumphs and sceptics, agnostics, atheists or infidels make up the majority in men, there will be nothing in the world but chaos; a life without comfort, a death without hope. Because if faith is dead, hope is dead, love and honesty are dead and happiness is dead. In the third book of the Dinkard we are told that scepticism, agnosticism and infidelity are coupled with selfishness, disturbance of the belief in the spiritual world, disturbance of piety, wickedness, lewdness, degeneration and approval of the law of non-existence.<sup>1</sup>

It may be affirmed that some years ago agnosticism was the creed of science. Tyndall, Huxley, and Darwin were the great leaders of thought who were styled agnostics. There have been, likewise, many other scientists who have been agnostics.

Happily in these days scientists are beginning to recognise the fact that different forms of evidence may be equally conclusive. They are now seeing that one line of proof may be just as positive in philosophy as another is in science and that when a scientist goes out of his domain to discuss questions that belong to another domain, if he carries his own scales and measures, he is not able to find correct results. And we know with certainty that a good scientist may not always be a good metaphysician or a good lawyer or a good theologian.

Even a man like Bacon did not regard theology, as being susceptible of being brought within the domain of science. He warns his readers against "an unwholesome mixture of things human and divine" and advises them "to render to faith the things that are faith's."

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol V. P. 294.

Faith, as well as science, is proper in its legitimate sphere; but all conclusions depend for their validity upon the correct employment of each in its proper domain. It should not be open to the one to take the place, or usurp the functions of the other. Mathematical certainty is attainable only within the region of mathematics; failing this, shall we look upon all else as uncertain?

It is futile to apply the same tests to settle questions about spiritual matters as we may use to settle questions in science. But we have all the same convincing proofs that God does exist; that man has a soul; that there is a future life. A psychic fact is just as much a fact as a granite mountain. If there is a God, it is important for man to know Him and there are facts which will prove His existence. If there is a life after death, it is important for man to know it; and there are facts which will prove it.

We learn from our Holy Book that Ahura-Mazda, our God, moved by His goodness, willed to communicate to man a part of His own nature. He communicated to him His spiritual nature. He gave him a part of His own Perfection. Now God possesses in His nature the ideal vision. He discovered by His vision the things which He might create when He willed. He did not behold them in Himself in that substantial form. Now if God behold the sensible world by the ideal vision and as I said above, if God gave man a part of His spiritual power, could not man see the spiritual world or spiritual things by means of that spiritual power of vision? Why, without discovering the very substance of being, unity, the infinite, the absolute, order, justice, do we not understand and accept what is being, unity, the infinite, the absolute, order, justice and so forth? And if we do understand and accept all these, why can we not understand and accept what God is, what the soul is, what its nature, origin or destiny is?

Again, we learn from the Zend-Avesta that beyond the world of nature there is another sphere of being and knowledge which is beyond the report of our senses and which no man has ever seen. Of that boundless world the boundless heavens are the visible symbol; and from that boundless world come proofs that are accessible to reason and known to reason. Before Columbus undertook to sail to the unknown world, he had much circumstantial evidence to convince him of its existence; and he knew that he was nearing the unknown land by the things that drifted from its shores.

We are in this world as yet in the elementary class of a school and we cannot now understand things that lie beyond our powers. We shall understand them in future when all our faculties shall be intensified a thousand-fold, and when we shall have more light intellectual as well as spiritual. The best cure for scepticism is light, the light that serves to keep our disposition more radiant. For the lack of it the body stumbles as do the mind and the spirit. Hence said the author of the Vendidad:— "Let him who desires knowledge, be taught the Holy Word, so that he may be increased in intelligence and grow strong in holiness..."<sup>1</sup> So also the great German philosopher, Goethe, in his last moments said: "I want more light." For the cure of all ignorance, of all scepticism, of all superstition, the light is indispensably necessary.

Intstead of materialising spirit, the profoundest science of our latest times spiritualises matter. Sir William Crookes once said: "All these observations find internal connection in the discovery of radium which probably is the basis of the coarser chemical elements here. Probably masses of molecules dissolve themselves into the ether waves of the universe or electrical energy. Thus we stand on the borderline

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<sup>1</sup> Vend iv, 44 and 45.

where matter and force pass into each other. In this border-land lie the greatest scientific problems of the future. Here lie the final realities, wide-reaching and marvellous."

So the strongest tide must turn. We shall live to see in a short period the wave of scientific materialism and that of materialism in life rolled back and vanished absolutely. And a great age of belief will come at the end of the last millenium when the greatest of the Saoshyants with men of perfect piety and knowledge will bring about the final Change, the final spiritual Resurrection ( Ristâkhez ) and the Renovation ( Frashôkereti ) of the world and permanently fix men's thoughts on spiritual facts and eternal truths, as is predicted by the inspired authors of the Zend-Avesta in the following passages: " O Mazda! When shall men of perfect mind come; when shall they drive from hence this evil of drunken joy..."<sup>1</sup> "O Ahura-Mazda! When shall perfect piety come to us? Who shall give us peace and deliverance from cruel evil men..."<sup>2</sup> "Such shall be the Saoshyants of the countries who shall go hand in hand with Thy Good Mind and Thy Righteous Order by doing deeds according to Thy commandment; for they are appointed to drive back the oppression and cruelty of the Daeva-worshippers,"<sup>3</sup> " At the Final Change Thou shalt come, O Ahura-Mazda! with Thy Bountiful Spirit, with Thy Good Mind and Sovereign Power by whose deeds the people of the world shall prosper through Righteousness—and Armaiti ( Perfect Piety ) shall teach or reveal regulations full of Thy Wisdom which no man can deceive."<sup>4</sup>

As in the above-given Gathic stanzas so in the following Dînkard passages we read: "Moreover, from the twelve Zodiacal signs they learnt that the daevas (the evil beings who opposed the religion) shall ultimately be overcome and destroyed; that the faithful shall be preserved by God in

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1 S. B. E. Vol. xxxi. Ys. xlviii. 10

3 Ys. xlviii. 12.

2 Ys. xlviii. 11

4 Ys. xliii. 6.

their conflict with the opposing innumerable devil-worshippers; that men shall become pure after much fight and bloodshed; and that in the world wherever the people should have remained ( adherents ) of their impure faiths, Hoshedar, Hoshedarmâh and Soshyos, the re-introducers and the propagators of the religion shall make them followers of the pure faith. By means of this pure Ahura-Mazda-given Religion Soshyos shall make the people free from afflictions and everlastingly happy.”<sup>1</sup>

A Parsi infidel once asked me in a gathering : “ What is religion ? Judging from the character of many professors of religion I do not admire religion.” I answered: “ I admit that there exists some abuses in regard to our religious doctrines and ceremonies. But may I ask : Where in this human world of ours do we find a single good thing not associated with abuses ? Do not abuses exist in the state ? Will you renounce your rights of citizenship because of the abuses ? Can we point to anything which has been more deplorably misused by men than paternal or civil authority ; does this fact constitute a reason for abolishing such authority ? Behold your own life. Is it free from all blemish ? The responsibility for abuses rests on those who misuse that which is good and not upon good itself which in a world like ours is ever liable to abuse.”

If we were to visit a picture gallery in the city of Venice and ask of an artist “What is the art of painting ?” Would he take us and show the works of a dilettante or would he take us to the works of such great masters as Raphael and Michael Angelo and say : “ That is painting.”

So, to those who look for enlightenment in the mere caricature of religion and in that which is the mere pretension of a holy life, I shall point instead to the life and history of some illustrious men and women, the blessed, extolled and

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk, Vol. IX, P. 617.

glorified in our Holy Volume; I shall point to Zoroaster, Havovi, Gustâsp, Hutaosa, Jâmâsp, Medhyômâh, Farshaoster Ardâvîrâf, Aderbâd, Tosar, Aderfernabag, and others of blessed memory. Their life and life-work show what true religion is. These were the men who were far above the common run, ever worthy of the honour of our remembrance.<sup>1</sup>

“The memory of the just is with praises.” Shall we say the same thing of those self-complacent materialists who look for salvation in worldly gains and hold it up as an ideal to others?

The golden image which Nebuchodnosor, the king of Babylon, erected to represent his supreme majesty, is everywhere famous. Having assembled around it the different officers of his empire, both civil and military, he commanded that at the first sound of musical instruments all must fall down and worship it. In this vast assembly only three young men were found who dared to despise this royal edict. Protesting against such a ceremony and expressing hatred of such worship, they would sooner go into a furnace than comply. “Be it known to thee, O, king ! that we will not worship thy gods, nor adore the golden statue which thou hast set up.” Now who were the men whom the king eventually favoured with honours ? Whom did he promote and make his favourites ? He made his favourites not those who were so ready to fall on their knees and pay him such vile adoration ; but these young men who despised him in open assembly. By a fresh edict the king promoted these three young men to a lofty dignity. After he saw them standing up and nobly erect, he had them proclaimed and crowned them.

Now, this precisely is what the world is every day imitating before our eyes. Those impatient to bow down before its image, the world eventually neglects ; whilst those, who, detesting fame and scorning servility, would rather enter the furnace of disgrace or persecution, it honours.

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<sup>1</sup> Yt, xiii,



In lieu of the Daênâ (the Law of Mazda) as represented in the Zend-Avesta, some modern Parsis have instituted for themselves a new form of worship. This manifests itself in the form of idolatry, not the idolatry practised by the Hindoos and Budhists—but a still more degraded form. The idol-worship among these communities, though a corrupt practice—has a sense of religion ingrained into it. It idealises nature, associates the powers and phenomena of nature with some ideal of the divine, and ascribes to these certain attributes. But the idolatry that is practised by a section of the Parsis, has not even this saving grace. Their idolatry is a form of enamour for the invention of science and its discoveries, of a fascination for wealth and the worship of Mammon ; the veneration of pomp and tinsel, and the worship of ego. It is a failing of the vain and the weak-minded to exalt mere God of his own idolatry than Ahura-Mazda and His Daênâ (Law). It is materialism which has proved the bane of our community.

The civilization of the Parsi materialists consists in the making and spending of money ; in the substitution of pseudo-benevolence for true personal charity ; in the fomenting of political and social rivalries and the propagating of license under the name of freedom ; in the enjoyment of profane literature and world's sensational news ; in the pursuits of pleasure and frivolity. All their spiritual interests are suffered to go to the wall.

It is a high ambition with them to be classified among the fashionable. Everything they crave, is for enjoyment and false show ; to attract the eyes of the world ; to gain applause and admiration. They are not eating for the mere sake of eating, not drinking for the mere sake of drinking but making a sort of science of their sensuality.

Their motto is what only too frequently we hear from young men to-day—"A short life but a merry one. Let us eat, drink and make merry, for to-morrow we die." But after

the merry life has been embraced, let them visit certain hospitals and see sights that might haunt them day and night and hold them from their enterprise. Too soon from their lips will come the cry : "I wearied myself in the way of iniquity and destruction and have walked through hard ways, What has pride profitted me or what advantage has the boasting of riches brought me ? I am a fool—a fool ?"

If a life in general is like a drama in which each of us plays his part, the above mentioned class of Parsis partake even still more of the character of a play. Now what do you say about the so-called society life, as it is lived in our midst ? Is it less unreal, less artificial, less conventional than the stage life in which nearly everything is unreal or artificial—the part played, the love made, the hatred shown, nay, the trappings, finery, jewellery and so forth ?

There is a certain insolence in this section of the so-called Parsi reformers. They deny everything. They disown Ahura-Mazda and Zoroaster, their Prophet ; they deny religion and society ; they deny even mathematical truth as well as spiritual truth, visible as well as invisible good. Nothing escapes their sway or sweep ; for their love of liberty knows no limit.

They directly and otherwise try to impress on us the belief that the whole existing social and religious fabric of our Zoroastrian community must be torn asunder and something new built up in its place. Dear reader ! note it well that it is good to reform a religion or a society, after it has suffered a decline from its first state ; for it is then an endeavour to restore it to the purity of its first origin. This kind of reformation is wholesome and holy and has been practised with success. But to change our ancient institution, to twist the law and quit the path which the founders of our religion and race marked out for us, is to wish not to reform a religion or a society but to overthrow it.

Activities of such men as they are, hinder the triumphs of true reform and stem true progress of the world though they themselves are blind to the results of their wicked aims and efforts. It is the experience of the world that under such attempts and aims social discipline becomes lax and falls off to pieces. Though confronted over and over again with failures in their plans of reform they do not suspect or see that something very important and essential is wanting in their efforts to promote true reforms in their community.

It is high time that they realized their blunder and corrected it, calling religion and through it God to their help and acknowledging that men have relations with God and religion more profound than those of nature or reason and that to disown those relations out of pride or vanity is to deprive the human race of its noblest virtues. To seek nothing beyond physical enjoyment in this life and to esteem good in only so far as it contributes to this enjoyment, is to renounce all real claim to the rights and dignity of manhood. "Therefore, spend the wealth of this (material) world for the sake of God and employ it on actions pertaining to Him, and trust always in the Almighty, for He will be with you in such wise that you will become thereby the best in the body and the soul. Exert yourself to store (spiritual) wealth for yourself in the next world, because only by the good which you do yourself, will you become a sharer in all the good deeds of the whole world—Improve yourself by means of the good doctrine that you may be regarded throughout the world as one reformed,"<sup>1</sup>

As years go by, the seeds of apostasy, materialism, scepticism, sensuality sown broad-cast yield in our community their wonted results as they did in France, Germany and in other countries. A brief survey of the evils exhibited by

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. V, P. 315,

the Parsis of our own times who discard religious beliefs, will suffice to bring home to us the need for a more sustained and steadier belief. I cannot pretend to do here anything more than to draw attention to a few out of many evils that are eating into the heart of our social organism and seriously threatening its physical and moral life.

The first and the worst evil of all which Parsis have to face, is the steadily growing tendency among their young men and women to remain unmarried for life or to marry at an advanced age. This tendency leads to a decline in the marriage rate and consequently to a decreasing birthrate. If the birthrate falls and continues to decline, sooner or later we may have to exclaim, "Behold! What comes of ignoring God and His Law (Din)."

History proves that a dwindling birthrate is a symptom of national decrepitude and a high infant mortality is a prodigious waste of national resources. The Roman Empire, so historians observe, perished for want of men. What would become of our world-renowned community if the present tendency to celibacy goes on increasing? What would become of our illustrious race if its young men and women persist in making matrimonial alliances with non-Zoroastrians? "(There are) several customs of our fathers and mothers stated in the treatise upon their functions (regarding us); namely, the wholesome preservation of their own race or family, also through our pure or unmixed condition."<sup>1</sup> ".....Men who are bound by the precepts of the religion, ought, with the object of avoiding sin and strife, to tie the knot of marriage with such believers in the religion as that strength might accrue to them and to the people of their race for deliverance from hell—Khetiodath is then said to be formed when it is formed within one's own race. And thus honour is obtained by (one's own) descendants and strength is acquired

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1 D, D, Dk, Vol X, P. 24.

by relatives and co-religionists, through prayers to the holy Self-existent.—A pair of man and wife from among their own people should form the tie of that relationship, in order that it may endure with safety for a long period, with the nearest of their kindred and with the most known of people known to them from among their community.....”<sup>1</sup> To my thoughtful Zoroastrian it must appear that the crime of racial suicide is becoming one of the gravest symptoms in the present life of his community.

Another symptom of communal decadence among the Parsis is the decline of character. It must be observed that the strength of a community or a nation depends on the number as well as on the character of its individuals. Speaking at Manchester on the occasion of the conferment upon him of the freedom of the city, Earl Haig addressed a special appeal to the young men of the universities. The Field Marshal remarked that he had no hesitation in attributing the victory in the great war with the Central Powers of Europe, to a moral cause, to the British character, to the capacity to combine and readiness to sacrifice all for what was right and good. He gratefully recognised Britain’s debt to the public schools and universities that had taken a great part in forming the character which won the war and was not less essential to the achievement of the new world.

Now it would be hard to gain-say that many of our Parsi homes are wanting in discipline and character. Here as in the public schools and colleges what do the Parsi parents desire for their children’s education? Do they desire to train up their children to the habit of thinking what is good or right or do they desire to cram their minds with exaggerated ideas of worldliness, fashion and vanity; to teach them, by their own bad examples, to mind chiefly the fleeting things of

times and sensuality ? What sense of responsibility can the children learn from their parents themselves frivolous and addicted to pursuits of pleasure ? It is a most distressing fact that on account of the lack of the good training and through undue freedom allotted to children, parents have often hardly any control over their boys and girls even in their teens.

The worship of wealth in its greedy pursuits is another symptom of the decadence of our race. There is a class of Parsis who pay an instinctive homage to wealth. It is a homage resulting from a profound faith in the potency of wealth. They believe that wealth is a spell, an omnipotence which can do everything. They measure happiness by wealth and by wealth they measure respectability ; so would they sacrifice anything to Mammon. The worship of wealth is carried to the most extravagant lengths. The one aristocracy at present in our community is the aristocracy of wealth. It seeks distinction in owning money, holding dinners and tea parties and owning influence in fashionable and political coteries.

On the other hand, our primitive Zoroastrians regarded it a higher ideal for their children to go into the world and earn merit and glory by the purity of life and living and not by accumulation of wealth merely.<sup>1</sup>

Another bad symptom is the mad passion for gambling, for getting rich by the fool's short cut to riches, I know of Parsis even the young and the poor who gamble at the card-table, the race-course or the Stock Exchange ; and among the rich and the so-called fashionable class it is practised in full swing. Many have been seduced and forced in spite of themselves into this vortex and driven to rack and ruin to the remorse of themselves and their families. This passion for gambling is, I regret to say, spreading like an infection in our community.

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<sup>1</sup> Vend III, 2-4 and XIX, 29-32; see also D. P. Dk. Vol. V, P. 315.

Gambling is an insidious robber which for a while puts in the purse but robs its victims in the long run and that too not only of their money but of all that sweetens life and sanctifies it. Calculate for a moment the hours of precious time wasted over it, the money that is tossed, the passions let loose, the vices bred, the quarrels engendered, the wealth lost, the miseries entailed and after that let the reader say for himself whether or not gambling is a sure symptom of moral deterioration.

It should always be remembered that anything leading to moral deterioration, the Zoroastrian Religion severely condemns. It forbids and condemns the appropriation, possession or use of money or anything obtained without diligence, industry or self-exertion. Hence it forbids and condemns idleness, sloth and beggary.<sup>1</sup>

Another evident symptom of degeneration in our community is the habit of smoking which entirely goes against the fundamental principle of purity taught by the Religion of Zoroaster. It goes against the Zoroastrian idea of purity in regard to Fire which should be held by the faithful as the most sacred element in Nature. "Fire", says the Dinkard, "is the original principle of water, of air and of every visible matter. To it is due the existence and sustenance of men. One should abstain from extinguishing it..... Moreover it should be.....out of the reach.....of fluids, of contaminating substances.....It should..... be preserved from hot or cold blasts.....It should be scrupulously guarded and be held as the symbol of worship, according to the dictates of the Religion. And further..... it should be cherished as the giver of intensive force to religious rites and proper devotions.'<sup>2</sup>

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1 The 4th chap. of the present volume,

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. ix. Ps. 644 and 645.

Men may lightly shatter the corporeal vase in which God has put the jewel of soul. But those who smoke, must know that tobacco produces various troubles and cancerous affections. The medical fraternity of Great Britain and the United States are combined in ascribing to the habit of smoking terrific unhealth. It is the opinion of a body of men with whom the study of medicine is a life-time work. A distinguished physician declared that he considered that the use of tobacco caused seventy different styles of diseases.

Tobacco is as destructive to the mind as to the body. An eminent doctor who was the superintendent of the insane asylum says : " Fully one-half of the patients we get in our asylum, have lost their intellect through the use of tobacco." Medical men uphold that tobacco attacks the nervous system and that through the nervous system it attacks the mind. It has been rightly said that the pathway to the physical and moral ruin is strewn thick with tobacco leaves. Let us note in this connection what Benjamin Franklin has said : " I never saw a healthy man in the exercise of common sense who would say that tobacco did him any good." What does Thomas Jefferson, a good and great authority, observe : "The culture of tobacco is a culture productive of infinite wretchedness."

Cigarette-smoking is said to be much worse than other modes of tobacco-smoking. It is a pity that cigarettes have become a plague of fashion among young Parsis of the richer and some of the middle classes. Those who smoke, must know that they work their way to destruction and smoke themselves out of their health and wealth.

It would be useful to my reader to know the following testimony of a great merchant who said : "In my early life I smoked six cigars a day at six and a half cents each. They averaged at that. I thought to myself one day that I would



just put aside what I consume in cigars and see what the saving would come to with compound interest." And he gives this statistic ! " Last July completed thirty-nine years since, by the grace of God I was emancipated from the filthy habit and the savings amounted to the enormous sum of 29,103 dollars by compound interest."

Be it said to the shame of the Parsi reformers, the so-called "liberal-minded" that they have never so far uttered a single word in condemnation of the vice. It is a shame that they enconfrage it by their silence, example and practice. In its effects it is like the anarchist running riot with the body, the mind and the soul ; the veritable enemy of youth. What a waste of income smoking entails. If the money spent and is being spent within the community on cigarettes be saved and collected, what an accumulation would it make for charity for the poor.

Add to this such evils as of sloth and beggary, of extravagance and indulgence, of looseness, lewdness and prostitution, of criminality, divorce and suicide, and the budget is all but complete of the horrors exposed so often to our view.

To what are we to ascribe this racial suicide ; this degeneration of character and conduct ; this greed of gold, this mad passion for gambling, this vice of smoking ; this morbid craving for pleasures which deteriorate and destroy the body ; this self-certred materialism which in the monied class asserts itself as a morbid infatuousness for ariificial ideals in life ?

The parents who in their homes call themselves the apostles of enlightenment, do not as much as like, much less do they attempt, to cultivate spirituality in themselves and their children. Giving to sensuality the place of reason, they decry the conciousness of spirituality as darkness and

superstition. Exterior superficialities and polished manners at best, education more or less of a liberal type—exhaust their ideas of culture. In a word, corporeal well-being is with them the *summum bonum* of their existence.

It is the same thing as always happens whenever there is apostasy and the Law of God is disowned. It happened to the Greeks and the Romans. If we glance at the history of the ancient Roman Empire and take the period of its fall, we find that the decline was caused by the absence in the large majority of its people of belief in God and the presence of false notion or belief about God. The Roman Empire was in its worst state when either materialism or pantheism was the wisdom of the learned and the most corrupt idolatry and vice were the practice of the multitude as well as of their leaders.

It is a common belief of History that the physical effeminacy of the ancient Romans, resulting from the luxurious habits caused by the refinements of their civilisation, rendered them easy prey to the hordes of the vigorous barbarians of Northern Europe. Other instances exist where ancient civilisations have risen and flourished and fallen. Fresh discoveries are almost every year made of the remains of pre-historic civilisations which must have seen their decay long before their tradition began. And in every case, historic or pre-historic, there exist evidences which prove that their extinction was the result of practically the same causes as led to the downfall of the Roman Empire.

I think it will be interesting to note in this place the attitude of the late Mr. Roosevelt, the great President of the United States, America, with whom I had the honour and pleasure of a short interview at Washington towards what is generally known as success in life. He has expressed in these words: "It is a bad thing for a community or a nation to raise and admire a false standard of success in life and there

can be no falser standard than that set up by the deification of material well-being in and for itself."

The saddest spectacle in this or as it must be in any world, is the rational and moral being, smitten with spiritual death, alive only to what is material and earthly. Let us ask ourselves in honest simplicity what there was at the bottom of their character which led the Germans of our day to go into war with all the world and then to fight it out in a spirit of aggression and wreckless courage? It was their disregard, and neglect of religion which is the strongest agency for the arrest of crime. It was their proud separation from God and religion that paved their way to ruin and disintegration.

We profess to pity the barbarian for his savagery; the barbarian in whom intellect, imagination and sensibility are dormant; but what shall we say of ourselves in whom they are not dormant and yet are as indifferent to religious belief as the barbarian himself. Can we honestly say of ourselves that we are conscious of our own higher nature and of its higher purpose and destination? Are we not debasing or destroying our higher nature and our higher purpose? Sincerely we must pity those Parsis amongst us who entirely lend themselves in earnest to worldliness as we would pity the gentleman of a little anecdote which I should like to give below in connection with our present subject.

It is said that a gentleman, brave according to the world's estimate, was one day gaily dressed, powdered and curled and mounted on a richly caparisoned, high mettled steed—trying to show off his prowess as a rider before some ladies whom he wished to please. Suddenly his horse threw him into a heap of mud from which he had to extricate himself all covered with dirt. The poor man was so overwhelmed with shame and confusion at this accident that in a passion of anger he instantly resolved to turn a religious

devotee, saying, " O traitor world ! thou hast mocked me ; but I will also make a mock of thee. Thou hast played me this trick, but I will play thee another ; for, henceforth, I will have neither part nor lot with thee and from this hour I resolve to become religious " He was true to his pledge and lived ever since an ascetic's life.

We have seen what a Parsi apostate is: how worldly, how materialistic, how given up to sensualism. We shall now proceed to see what a Parsi heretic is. A heretic differs from an apostate in that he denies one or more of the doctrines of his religion, whereas the apostate denies the religion itself. Apostasy as well as heresy is looked upon by the authors of the Zend-Avesta as a great evil, and a grievous sin. It is positively stated in the Holy Volume,\* the Zend-Avesta that there is no forgiveness for those who will fully deny the Zoroastrian Religion or any of its doctrines : " Ahura-Mazda answered : ' O holy Zarathushtra ! It is the first of the sins that men commit when they teach one of the faithful another law, another faith, a lower doctrine and thus leads him astray knowingly and in spite of his conscience's warning against the sin, he commits the sin of a Peshotanu''<sup>1</sup> "He gives a tongue to the wolf who imparts the knowledge of the Holy Word (Māthra) to the heretic,"<sup>2</sup> ".....Those who may have fallen from the Religion (of Mazda) and become damned. should be persuaded to turn back. Again, a check should be given to the advancing strength and the attack of the Yahud religion of Rum,.....and the Mani religion of Turkestan, lest their wickedness and degradation should enter into (our) coreligionist friends and the purity of our religion ....."<sup>3</sup> " They considered this too thus, namely, there is no one whatever who is most counter-working for this Religion (of Mazda) as the heretic..... He who is a heretic, a base

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1 Vend. xv. 2.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. I. P. 24.

2 Erpatistān Chap. I. 17.

imposter and most severe to the Religion, comes into (our Religion), with the (seeming) desire of propagating the Holy Word ; but it is he who really brings selfishness and dissensions in the Religion.”<sup>1</sup> “.....An adult is worthy of death on account of the good religion he would abandon, on account also of the adopted law of the foreign faith he is worthy of death.....”<sup>2</sup> “The spirit of wisdom answered : ‘If the sin which people commit, the eighth is he who worship an idol. The thirteenth, who commits heresy The fifteenth, who commits apostasy. The sixteenth, who commits demon-worship’<sup>3</sup> “A man is he who is without doubt as to the creativeness of Ahura-Mazda, the existence of the resurrection and future life.....And his belief is in the pure and good Religion of the Mazda worshippers and he does not believe in and does not listen to any heterodoxey.”<sup>4</sup> “A demi-man is he who performs the affairs of the worldly and spiritual existences according to his own opinion self-conceitedly and obstinately.....”<sup>5</sup>

To reject any principal point of doctrine revealed and taught by Zoroaster is to reject the principle on which the religion is founded. Therefore, he who rejects it, is a rebel against the authority of the Zend-Avesta. Without doubt, this opinion is strongly founded. What folly can be greater, what pride more insupportable than that we should think so of ourselves as to obstinately believe that whatever comes uppermost into our head, is a greater truth than what has been thought of, approved of and received by so many eminent and holy persons before us and upheld and confirmed by the combined opinion of so many centuries ? When we prefer our own particular judgement to the truths of Zoroaster and his disciples whom Ahura Mazda had chosen as the founders of our Religion and race, and persuade ourselves that

1 D. D. Dk. Vol. xi. Ps 80-81.

2 Dd. xli, 3

3 Mīnōt Khirad S. B. E. Chap.  
xxxvi, 16-19.

4 S. B. E. Mīnōt Khirad xlii 6-9.

5 Ibid. xli, 10.

the way we have discovered, is far more enlightened than that which the inspired Prophet and his disciples revealed, this preference, this persuasion and this presumption are truly diabolical. Is not this a deceit and self-delusion ?

Many Parsis thus blinded and self-deceived are like the Athenians of ancient times, whom everything that was new or strange or novel attracted. Likewise, our Parsi Athenians look for more light and new enlightenment than is to be found in the Scriptures and straightway plunge themselves into darkness and thence fall back, retrograde and deteriorate. They allow themselves to be carried away from the true path by the false hopes and promises and claims of that irreligious clique of the so-called Parsi reformers about whom I have said enough already, and of certain religious non-Zoroastrian cults that try in vain to undermine the truths of their religion.

It is a foregone conclusion that the misdirected energy and effort of both the clique and the cult will come ultimately to nothing; but, whilst they are alive and active, the effect of their cult upon the Zoroastrian community cannot but be deleterious. Therefore, in the last part of this chapter I would devote some pages to expose the fallacy of their cult to warn those who listen and give ready ears to their false and deceptive teaching as against implicit faith in the Good Law (Dīn) of Mazda revealed through Zarathushtra.

As said above, there are many Parsi apostates amongst us : some embracing Christianity or Mohammadanism ; some professing naturalism or rationalism ; but there are among us also those heretics who are Zoroastrians only in name, but by belief they are Hindoos or Budhists.

There exists a great multiplicity of religions among mankind and these religions differ one from the other in countless ways. If the difference between religion and religion was but slight, the folly of esteeming them all alike as good

would be in a way tolerable : but as these differences, so far from being slight, are radical, it would be foolish and intolerable to put them all in one and the same rank as for our estimation. Much more foolish and even sinful would it be for us to condemn the religion in which we are born and bred before it is deeply studied, impartially examined and carefully compared with such other religion or philosophy which we wish to adopt : " He whose wish is to fully understand the wonderfulness of the Mazda-worshipping religion and the statements of the primitive faith, examines into it in a manuscript of that character and shall understand more fully the wonderfulness and truth of the religion....."<sup>1</sup>

It is a wise maxim that no man should make a change of his religion unless he was sure to better himself by that change. In the ordinary matters of their daily life men do not readily accept substitutes unless they are convinced that these are better and safer. They make studious comparisons between such substitutes and the objects replaced by change. They make all and sundry inquiry and weigh the possible results before they substitute a thing for another. How foolish of us then to abandon this caution of every-day life when it comes to a matter at once so serious as the adoption of a change in our religion ?

As it is well known, one of the most prominent substitutes which is offered to Zoroastrians is that which goes by the name of Theosophy. During the last quarter of a century very persistent and bold attempts have been made by a section of the Parsis to substitute the theosophic cult for the religion of the Zend-Avesta, the Book we inherited from our illustrious forefathers. We are asked by the section to adopt this queer cult which is devised to take the place of our beloved Religion.

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1 Sikand-Gûmân-i-Vigâr, S. B. E. Chap. V. 93—95.

Just as attempts were made in the days of Mazdak and Mâni to amalgamate some false and sophistical ideas with the true philosophy and religion of the great ancient Zoroastrian teachers, so in our days attempts have been made at such an amalgamation in the hope that theosophy may one day become a religion of universal belief, and diffuse itself so as to draw men of all religions together and form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood without distinction of cast or creed.

Sane and faithful Zoroastrians turn away, as in disgust, from the confused mass of its dogmas and doctrines; because they readily perceive that it is quite unworthy of adoption through its beliefs which are self-contradictory, unauthentic and unreliable.

However, some simple folks in our community, led away by the decoyments of theosophy, have gone so far as to disown their ancestral religion; and that too before they have ever cared to examine and put to the test the cult of their adoption. Unfortunately, they fail to see the fallacies on which it is based and the consequences which must follow the adoption of its principles. The days of superstition and humbuggery are not over and it seems as though the Parsis like to be deceived.

Converts to theosophy are made by that strange propensity which shows itself in a readiness in men to give themselves up to delusions, losing judgment and throwing themselves recklessly away to the influence of others. It is a notable though curious fact that some delusions sweep over communities like wild-fire. Hence we see why folly in all ages get the better of common sense. Mysterious excitement takes hold of softminded men very readily and deprives them of their sense and judgment. Gradually as the excitement subsides, men return to their balanced state



of mind and arise to a sense of their follies, but are ashamed to confess them. So it is with theosophists. They realise in the long run the folly of their beliefs; but are ashamed to confess it. They continue to be theosophists or freemasons in name only.

Parsi theosophists have done great harm to themselves and the community to which they wrongly claim to belong. I say emphatically that they have not the least claim to call themselves or to be called Zoroastrians, for they confess inwardly and openly that their anti-Zoroastrian cult of theosophy is superior to the Zoroastrian Religion. Can any sane man believe that one can be a Zoroastrian and a theosophist at one and the same time? It is a manifest impossibility. •

It is perfectly eligible for me to subject to a searching scrutiny here the cult of theosophy, especially as its Parsi adherents sedulously propagate their views among our community and unsettling the religious faith of some of them, seek to withdraw them from their allegiance to their ancestral Religion.

Theosophy claims to be founded on the Zend-Avesta and claims to be its great support and strength. Yet whenever the Zend-Avesta militates against any of the theosophic tenets or doctrines, our Holy Text is twisted and perverted in the effort to assign to Zoroastrian doctrines an unnatural and wrong theosophic interpretation. Theosophy does not attack Zoroastrianism directly. It affects, indeed, to explain our dogmas and doctrines. But it explains them according to and in the spirit of theosophical belief which to all intents and purposes is the upsetting of Zoroastrian belief in its entirety.

Theosophy rejects the clear and simple teachings of the Zend-Avesta. It does not accomplish this by a flat denial of its teachings but freely quoting and speaking approvingly of

them, it virtually denies what the Zend-Avesta reveals. It deals with the Zend-Avesta as though it was capable of being twisted as one wishes. It puts meanings upon words which they never conveyed and arbitrarily declares that the words mean such interpretation as they put upon it.

But we must bear it in mind that if it was open to us to change the meaning of words as it suited our object or purpose, we could read in a book whatever we wished to. By a process such as this it would be easy to imagine that there is authority for a belief where there is none, and to admit proof for that which is to be proved but such a process is possible only with wilful obstinacy or credulity. I say all this because there exist among us some Parsis who, used to inaccurate reasoning and unaccustomed to careful personal investigation, make of the Zend-Avesta quite another book from what it was originally intended.

Theosophy is not a religious system. It can claim no pretension for assuming a place among the religions of the world. It is but a jumble of the distortions of all and sundry dogmas, doctrines, rites and ceremonies of various religions ; and hence it differs from all religions.

Theosophy appears to be the outcome of an effort to build up something new on the foundation of the ancient Indo-Aryan religions and to revive the weird fancies which some men have held concerning life and destiny.

Two names figure before our mind whenever this theosophic cult is mentioned : Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott. They founded it in about 1875 A. D. The instructors of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott have been said to be the Mahaatmas, supposed to be great beings who have attained to a high stage of human perfectibility.

These beings, they say, cannot be seen by common mortals. They can be seen only by those who have attained to

the same stage of perfectibility. They are reincarnations of men too wise to die. They may or may not put on their bodies ; they can travel from one place to another with great velocity and are at any moment at the service of such disciples who have reached the proper stage. They may be from a hundred to many thousands years old. Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott are supposed to have received many communications from some of these Mahaatmas, even written communications dropped from the ceilings of their rooms.

The declared purposes of theosophic organisation were to form a universal brotherhood of mankind without regard to race, creed, sex, caste or colour,—a popular idea, by the way, to attract the attention of indiscreet, and illiterate persons to promote the study chiefly of Indo-Aryan literature, philosophy and religion ; to investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man ; to supplant all other religions and replace them with theosophy or occultism as the one religion of the world. It is necessary, in the first place, to observe that the leading principles of theosophy are not described in simple and untechnical phrases. The principles are so illogical, inconsistent and so unreasonable that it can be fairly said that theosophy is wrong from its beginning upto its end. Even its exponents differ among themselves as to what these leading principles are, and change and abandon them at will.

We shall now turn to a brief examination of the chief beliefs and doctrines of the theosophist and briefly compare them with those contained in the Zend-Avesta.

The theosophist holds the following beliefs:—

- (1) That there is a supreme, inscrutable, all-pervading and absolute Deity, from which all visible things have proceeded and into which they will all return. In fact, the personality of the Deity is denied.

(2) That man is an imperishable entity of divine and of infinite potentiality.

(3) That there are certain spiritual powers in man.

We are told by the theosophist that God is only the Higher-self. He does not, cannot admit a personal God. He sets forth definitions which represent God as "an impersonal thought, permeating and interpenetrating all things so that God is all and all is God." In other words, theosophy is Pantheism. Spirit and matter are, according to it, only different states of one and the same "substance" that underlies all phenomena. It holds that the substance of man's soul and all things and the substance of the Deity are the same. Now the matter is one state of the one Substance, the all God, but inferior to the other state, spirit. If that be the case, the all-God is not equally developed. He is not then, perfect, and may therefore aspire and attain to the Higher-self ! To admit the existence of a Personal God and Creator and the Supreme Ruler of the universe would be to destroy the claims of the Mahaatmas and undermine the foundation of theosophy. Therefore the theosophist without denying the Deity actual existence denies Him personality.

Closely allied with this theosophic conception of God is the other thought that all things are fixed by an eternal necessity. In other words, we have in theosophy the old fatalism and pessimism of the Indo-Aryan religion. If, then, we accept theosophy, we must admit the theory of changeless fate, that we have no power to change anything; nor is God able to change our fate.

Theosophy teaches us many strange and unreal things concerning man. According to theosophy man is not a creature of God ; but the result of development in the process of evolution. He consists of one spirit, three souls, a life principle and two bodies—seven distinct things ; hence the

expression, "Man is a septenary being." The spirit is invisible; the soul is a trinity in unity--spiritual human and animal. The body is really not one but two, the outer being the physical body and the inner one being the astral. The outer is reduced to dust but the inner may exist for a while after death. The ego goes on through a land of dreams until it makes and seeks to be reincarnated, to take a new body; and this process may be repeated many times.

Reincarnation is one of the distinctive teachings of theosophy. The soul or the ego must live in some other body again and again. As some one has said: "John Smith who was vigorous and self-reliant, may reappear as Mary Jones, weak and dependent; Sarah Thomson, a refined woman may come again as a pushing politician." A man may be reincarnated as a woman and a woman as a man. The father of one family may come back to be the mother of another family. This doctrine of reincarnation is one of the fundamental principles of theosophy.

Connected with it is the doctrine of Karma or justice by which they explain the misery and suffering in the world. An individual condition is considered by the theosophist as the result of the past thoughts and actions of the soul. The theosophist believes that Karma is "the most important of the laws of nature, the universal law of harmony, the twin doctrine to harmony."<sup>1</sup> According to this law man's present condition is settled as a consequence of his acts in a previous life, and his acts in the present life will determine his condition when he takes life again in another body. But the fact must be borne in mind that according to theosophy man in his new bodily life has not the slightest recollection of his acts in his previous life or lives, and so can not profit by his experiences in his past lives. Man is thus deprived of the most important means of correcting, improving

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<sup>1</sup> Ocean of Theosophy P. 89.

and redeeming himself in his new life ; because otherwise man ought to be able to remember his past errors and his past sins in order to avoid them in his present life.

There is besides another point of great objection against the theosophic idea of justice or Karma. If God's law was thus inexorable, unchangeable and remorseless, then there ought to be no prayer, no appeal to Him for mercy, no sincere profession of repentance, no pardon and no alleviating circumstances !

The theosophist claims that man is not without friends; that such friends ever watch over him and communicate to him all that is best for him. These friends are " highly developed men," perfected from other periods of evolution whom the theosophist call Mahaatmas, meaning great souls. He also believes and tries to make others believe that these Mahaatmas appear and disappear at will, know all things, explain all things and clear all mysteries. The whole scheme of theosophy, with its pantheism, reincarnation and karma, depends on the Mahaatmas who are supposed to be communicators of all truths.

As I have quoted above, theosophy speaks of " highly developed men," But there has not been one single authenticated instance of a mortal being that after a million or two years of reincarnations has become a Mahaatma and returned from the dead to reveal to the living men of this world all things known to him.

And what does theosophy teach us as to the end of all ? It teaches that all will be absorbed eventually into the eternal and final all, into the great abyss of impersonality called God. This absorption is called Nirvâna which is nothing but annihilation, the blotting out of the soul as a separate existence to be absorbed in the impersonal Deity.

This, the theosophist tells you, is so superior to the Religion of Zoroaster !

The theosophist claims that the divine essence could be communicated to the higher spiritual self in a state of ecstasy by which means a soul can become one and identified with the infinite. This is the highest condition but reached only by a few. This condition is attained by the state known as Samadhi practised by the Yogis who facilitate it by profound abstinence in food and drink.

Finally let us see what sort of moral principles theosophy preaches. In a word, they are such as should always prove barren to their very possessor and practiser. The very notion of God and the belief that the spirit within the theosophist is divine, are calculated to raise in him an idea of self-sufficiency and vanity and uncharitableness

Indeed, the spirit of theosophy is the opposite of charitableness. A theosophist holds that the spirit of theosophy is broad and not narrow, is tolerant and not intolerant. And yet he consents to impart the so-called divine truths under the invisible seal of secrecy only. The members of the theosophical society like those of masonry are by oath bound to reveal absolutely nothing to those who are not theosophists or masons. Their small inner circle look down upon the common people, considering them as not worthy of anything higher. Ordinary men are, as it were, excluded from divine truths. Like Buddhism, theosophy has its greater or less secrets. The theosophist like Pythagoras reserves the sacred knowledge of things for the favoured few. He claims close relationship with the mysteries. His doctrines are not to be communicated to the people at large. Thus, then, charity is no feature of the teaching of theosophy.

Now compare the above-given theosophical notions about God, man, his future state and morality with the

conceptions of the Deity, and man, of his destiny and the moral principles contained in the Zend-Avesta. Close study and examination of the Zend-Avesta point to the certain conclusion that the Zoroastrian Religion teaches, supports or countenances nothing like pantheism, reincarnation, fatalism, annihilation, Nirvâna or mahaatmaism.<sup>1</sup> In fact, Zoroastrianism has ever set its face against such absurd and misleading beliefs.

Think of the idea of God such as is set forth in the Zend-Avesta and then as it is expounded by the theosophist. Think of the Zoroastrian's Supreme Being, the Creator of all things, visible and invisible. He is not the sum total of all things. Ahura-Mazda is described as seeing, hearing, feeling, sympathising and showing mercy to His creatures.

Man's personality implies the 'existence of the Divine Personality and the Divine Personality carries with it the ideas of an Intelligent First Cause, a 'Wise and Powerful Creator who works upon a plan; a Beneficent Providence who provides for the wants of His creatures; a Father who is ever watchful over His creatures, loving them with tender love and drawing them lovingly into communication with Him. Such is the conception of God which Zoroastrianism presents to us. Now which of the two ideas seems nobler? There is but one answer; and that is—the idea of God as conceived by our Great Prophet Zoroaster.

When a Zoroastrian dies, he has no reincarnation to go through again and again,—the weary round of earthly cares and trials. His soul passes into Heaven, Hell or Hamistagân to await there the joyful resurrection of the body at the Final Change (Frashôkereti) of the world and the final judgement of Ahura-Mazda.<sup>2</sup>

According to the Zend-Avesta man has body and soul. The body when man dies, is reduced to dust but the soul

1 See the following chapters of my present volume.

2 See the last chapter of this volume.



retains its personality and is always growing more and more like Ahura-Mazda, Zoroastrianism is the Religion that urges man to develop his best powers and promises the continuance of ever-ascending progress in holiness and an ever-enlarging capacity for bliss.

There is nothing like absorption or annihilation but there is an eternal life in the nearest presence of Ahura-Mazda. The life of Heaven is the life of sinless blessedness.<sup>1</sup>

We find that Zoroastrianism is the religion of charitableness and hope ; theosophy, the cult of uncharitableness and despair. The Zend-Avesta has no secrets or secret beliefs, philosophical or religious, which its promoters keep back from the masses, Zoroaster or his disciples or his successors did not pledge their followers to silence or secrecy. Nor did they speak to them and masses in parables like the Gnostics in the early Christian ages.

As it is impossible to confound life with death, so it is impossible to confound Zoroastrianism with such false system as theosophy. As we shall see at length in the following chapters, Zoroastrianism and theosophy differ in doctrines, in morals, in ceremonies, in their likes and dislikes and it seems impossible in whatever light we may regard them, to put them together on one common level.

We cannot make Zoroaster a preacher of theosophy without warping, mutilating, and degrading his whole recorded mind. Particular texts, when isolated from the Prophet's general teaching, may be pressed with plausible effect into the service of theosophical theories but take Zoroaster's doctrine as a whole and it must be admitted that it is the antithesis of theosophy.

Theosophy assumes too many theories as facts to substantiate its claims. It assumes the theory of pantheism ;

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<sup>1</sup> See the last chapter of this volume

it assumes the theory of evolution and the theory of reincarnation ; it assumes that there are such beings as Mahaatmas. But all these sundry theories are not and cannot be substantiated and proved. They are all perplexing, contradictory, inconsistent and misleading. They have their principal origin in Hinduism and Buddhism. Surely, there is no moral grandeur, no uplifting of the soul, no broadening of the mind, no advance in the way of righteousness, not even any real or lasting comfort in such beliefs as those, which theosophists preach. As to knowledge, moral or philosophical, theosophy affords hardly anything superior to that in Zoroastrianism. In fact, in no respect has theosophy been able to enlighten, advance or benefit mankind ; since it abounds in false and absurd beliefs ; and such beliefs are emphatically condemned and forbidden in the Religion of Zoroaster.

Doctrines preached must be able always to stand the test of examination in the tribunal of the human mind and the test of historical experience. They should not seek refuge under the charm of the unknown and hypocrisy. They must answer our questions and satisfy our curiosity. This undoubtedly theosophy does not.

How is it then possible for any one to place confidence or look for knowledge in a cult which is fraught with so many of tissues of absurdities and unsubstantiated theories. There may be some honest, earnest and learned men amongst the theosophists who accept the claims of theosophy but the weight of evidence and reason is against them.

Misrepresentation such as Zoroastrianism has suffered at the hands of Parsi theosophists, is nothing new in its history. The Religion has been assailed by Parsi unbelievers from generation to generation. It suffered from slander, caricature and depreciation in the primitive Avestan times through the Kavis, Karapans, Usigs, Bandavas ; as well as in the Sassanian

times through the Mazdakites and the Manichians. In later periods it suffered through Mohammadans and in our own times it suffers from the Parsi apostates and heretics.

It is worthy of inquiry why Zoroaster's religion has met with such prolonged and persistent opposition from some of the mankind. The reason true and simple is that it never favoured or countenanced immorality and loose ideas in men.<sup>1</sup> There has been no religion in the world so sternly uncompromising and irreconcilable in its opposition to sophistry, vice and wickedness as the Zoroastrian Religion. Naturally it has not found followers in propagandists whose lower standard of thought and personal vanity have always rebelled against Zoroaster's firmer belief for truth and morality.

From the 7th to the 10th century A. D. after the invasion of the Arabs, Mohammadanism had had a speedy extension because of some natural causes. Mohammadanism had few dogmatic truths; it was the religion of the ruling race who favoured it in every possible way and offered temporal advantages to those who became converts. In those centuries many Zoroastrians became Mohammadans; not because they had fault to find with the Zoroastrian Religion but because they were forced or frightened into conversion. Those who refused to take part in Mohammadan worship exposed themselves to the severest penalties and to vexatious fines and other forms of annoyance. But as persecution has always acted as a winnowing fan, separating the chaff from the good grain, it frightened the faint-hearted into compliance and stimulated the generous and the courageous to heroism.

Indeed, we are very slow to apprehend the fact that in our own times our religion is being faced with hostility

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<sup>1</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. x, Ps. 12 and 13.

more insidious and no less determined than that which it had to face in the days of open and avowed persecution. In those ancient times it was not so difficult to see that the enemies were waging war against our beloved Religion as it is in our own days.

It is sad and outrageous in the extreme that men born and bred as Zoroastrians, should above all display enmity against Zoroastrianism. They are its deadliest enemies. Those most privileged by rank, the most eminent through popularity, the most independent by their wealth, the most illustrious by their birth, education and profession, some of these Parsis are the people that most insult it with their bitter animosity. They are living irreligious and immoral lives. They live amongst us. But do we boycott them? Do we condemn and hate them? Do we cut them off from our society? That we do not. On the contrary, we honour and respect them. People talk about their bestialities in private but in public the subject is studiously avoided. Hence the vices and faults which were once the evil monopoly of the affluent or the luxurious, are now imitated by and made conspicuous among the people of the middle and the lower classes.

Orthodox Zoroastrians look upon the prospect with anxious hearts. Events of recent years make it abundantly clear that the Parsi apostasy and the Parsi heresy<sup>1</sup> have more than any other cause undermined the belief of our people in their religion and through such shattered belief they have undermined morality of our race.

We need not surprise that heretic doctrines and apostasy of the modern Parsis have found quite a number of adherents. Men are ever susceptible to what pampers their passions or accord them free play.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, it is surprising that the instinct of self-preservation has not so far impelled the Zoroastrian

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<sup>1</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. X. P. 12,

community as a whole to take protective measures against the unceasing encroachments on their religion of its bitter enemies. There is pressing need for organised resistance to save the religion and the race from such encroachments. The community must put itself on self-defence and contrive means for crushing and counteracting with energy and indomitable courage the deadly influence and effect of all deliberate and relentless campaigns against our Religion. Every individual Zoroastrian should do all that lies in him to stem the tide of irreligion which threatens to ruin his community. He should ever hold on in the battle-field of his religious life. Some unforeseen circumstance may crown him with victory in his battle with the Parsi apostates and the Parsi heretics. Triumph is the reward of constancy and faithfulness.

The time will come when our people shall arouse from their indifference and indifferentism ; when their spirit shall be quickened by a worthy consciousness of their own powers and to fulfil the purposes for which the sublime thoughts of Ahura-Mazda, Asha and Heaven are given them by their Holy Book, the Zend-Avesta. The time must dawn on the community when the Parsi apostate and the Parsi heretic will be looked down as criminal against our Zoroastrian religion and society. The community has no need for them ; it will not be the poorer if they are ousted from among its midst.

Our Zoroastrian race, afflicted as it is with moral and religious diseases, need not give itself up to despair ; for Ahura-Mazda, ever vigilant finds a relieving agency for our deliverance. When men endeavour to spread darkness on earth by their unbelief, God in His mercy sends to it a band of His chosen few, Saoshyants<sup>1</sup> (Benefactors) who dissipate darkness by their light and triumph over error. It is in this manner that Divine Providence continually watches over the happiness of the faithful and sends them help when they stand in need of it.

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<sup>1</sup> The next chapter of this book about Saoshyants,

We are told by the Zend-Avesta that Ahura-Mazda sends Saoshyants ( Enlightened men ) from time to time to instruct men in the truths of faith and to render them worthy of receiving such truths by reforming first their mode of life and thought. Just as a general, when the battle is begun, observes from a rising ground the state of the combat in order to send reinforcements whenever they are wanted, so Ahura-Mazda, the greatest general of all, beholds from Heaven our spiritual conflict and sends according to our necessities new reinforcements of Saoshyants to help and promote our spiritual welfare.<sup>1</sup> We must therefore rest assured that the Providence of Ahura is so great that He will never permit unfaithful beliefs in our own or future times to endure without applying to it a remedy. The annals of our Religion show that, when the Kavis, Usigs, Bandaves, Karapans, Mazdakites, Manichians and others molested the peace of our Zoroastrian race, Ahura-Mazda sent Gustâsp, Jâmâsp, Farshaoster, Ardeshir Bâbakân, Shâpûr, Tosar, Noshirwân, Ardâvirâf, Aderbâd-Mâhrespand and others to fight their nefarious activities and to illumine the world with the purity of their doctrines and lives.<sup>2</sup>

Let us, therefore, hope that our Zoroastrians will try to understand their religion which will enable them to understand things and actions as they are truly themselves. They will ruminate seriously and frequently ponder upon their religious truths as their Prophet Zarathustra has commanded them and thus they will disabuse themselves of the chimeras and errors of our age. They will confirm themselves in true sentiments and principles of piety. They will resolve upon what will conduce most to their salvation and they will lead a life truly Zoroastrian : ".....Wherever and at what time soever Asmoghs come to raise a contest about religion, at those times, through the sagacity, wisdom and strength appertaining to it,

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<sup>1</sup> See Ibid,

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol IX. Ps. 575—582.

means are found to break down all trouble-giving Ashmoghs, to refute (them) by God's religion, and to keep back harm from mankind." ".....It is always necessary to send religion from time to time to keep men back from being mixed up with sin and to regenerate them. Gayómard, who was the origin of mankind and the first king of the world, was the first to accept the religion from the Creator. And Sosyons—the last bringer of religion for mankind from God and the embellisher of the world through religious deeds—he, who will make mankind walk in purity—is the chief and lord of the last men ; he, in accordance with the will and desire of the Creator will be the bringer of His religion at the time of the End and will be the giver of perfect beauty to the work of rendering the world pure, free from harm and fit for Paradise—which work was first commenced through Gayomard. All the reformers of mankind are considered as connected with its religious designs.....Religious teachers who in times of exceedingly sinful deeds and depraved manners, and during the pre-dominance of those who make men exceedingly sinful in respect of religion and make them sceptical regarding the good religion and of those who profess a religion which encourages men to go towards darkness,—are the promoters of religion illuminers and superior knowledge—possessing—renderers (Saoshyants) of the world by means of imparting to it knowledge regarding the entertaining of hopes about the first world.....".<sup>1</sup>

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1 D. P. S. Dk. Vol. I. Ps. 5, 29 and 30;

## CHAPTER II.

### SOME IMPORTANT FEATURES OF THE LIFE OF ZOROASTER AND OF THE ZEND-AVESTA.

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A voyager, before he is long at sea, realises to a greater or lesser degree, the importance of life-boats to his ship. There are times, likewise, when we, one and all, feel that we are in a spiritual sense out at sea. Numerous anxious and disturbing questions strike us as do waves after waves of thought rise before us and strike the vessel of our mind and life.

Such of us who are accustomed to thinking, long to reach some haven of safety and spiritual satisfaction. We realise the fact that if we secure a good life-boat, it is well and good, for through its medium we reach our final destination, the shore. It is, therefore, necessary and advisable that we should examine the life-boat before we risk our life in it; we must test its soundness, before we put it to anything like practical use.

In all thinking men and women there arise, at one time or other of their life, questions about God, the human soul, the eternal destiny of man, the life in this world, and so forth. Such questions suggest themselves to them in proportion as they are thinking people. In such search after truth they all need life-boat for safe voyage,—the life-boat of Religion.

How often have Parsis adopted some leaky life-boat for their spiritual voyage? Some have taken to rationalism, scepticism, materialism, sensualism; others have turned aside, mystified by the wonders of Theosophy or captivated by the society of the influential men of Freemasonry or attracted by the specious dogmas and doctrines of Christianity, all of which the Zend-Avesta utterly rejects and condemns on account of



their absurd theories and contradictory and conflicting dogmas and doctrines, as has been shown from time to time in the course of this volume.<sup>1</sup>

The spiritual life-boat which the Parsis have inherited from their remote illustrious and glorious ancestors for their souls safe-being and salvation is the Religion of Zoroaster, "which the Creator, Ahura-Mazda sent (for) its proclamation not only in the country of Iran, but in the whole world, and among all races (of mankind), and has caused it to be propagated in the entire world wherever (there were) purities and (even) wherever (there were) impurities : spiritually through (its) surpassing philosophy and truthful words, and materially through truthful deeds. In each (of those countries and tribes) it (became) so current that even as to him who was the most sceptical person, this religion with its sublime essentials, became current with all purities extraordinarily in that life of corruption.—This Religion has been ever progressive ; and the Evil Spirit will become languished on account of it ; so that the Religion will attain to complete currency and thereby the world will attain to purity.—And the reason why (some) people of the world turn away from it, lay not in (any) unworthiness of (its) unique nature nor in general defectiveness of the Religion wherein truth of everykind subsists ; but in the temptations—from the demons within (men) and in the part played by those fiends in bodily forms in (their) struggle for victory." <sup>2</sup>

So according to the above passage of the Dinkard Zoroastrianism is the unique, the perfect and true Religion revealed by the unique and true Prophet Zarathushtra "who has mani-

1 Sikand Gâmânîk Vigâr S. B. E. Vol. xxix Ps. 170, 177-180, 185-186. 193-194, 212-213; D. P. Dk. Vol. I, Ps. 34-36; Dd. S. R. E. Vol. xviii Ps. 140, 141; Minoi Khirad S. B. E. Vol. xxiv, Ps. 53 and 83; etc.

2 D. D. Dk Vol. xi, 81 and Vol. x, Bk. V. P. 12.

festated clearly, explicitly and unquestionably the treasure of the worldly and spiritual existences of every kind. There is then no other creed through which it is possible to obtain and know that treasure.<sup>1</sup> Hence the holy Psalmist says: '.....O Ahura ! Thy Faith is uttered ? ..... ;, all other (creeds or gods.....) I look upon with my spirit's hatred.'<sup>2</sup> "The wisdom intended for the professors of the Mazdayasni Religion—every portion of that wisdom,—is not obtained by the reasoning faculty (of man) but it is made known by the Giver of existence to the Mazdayasni Religion and its Revealer."<sup>3</sup> "A man becomes more and most good by putting more and most faith in the religion of Ahura-mazda And thereby he becomes a holder of greater and greatest relations with the Creator, Ahura-Mazda, the source of all good."<sup>4</sup> Hence it is that "an adult is worthy of death on account of the good religion (he) would abandon, on account also of the adopted law of the foreign faith he is worthy of death."<sup>5</sup> "If any one should arrest the greatness, the glory and the splendour of the Mazdayasni Religion for the sake of introducing (another) religion, the faithful should keep themselves on the right path—And those who may have fallen from that religion and become damned, should be persuaded to turn back. Again a check should be given to the advancing strength and the attack of the Yahud Religion of Rûm and the "Masahiya" religion of Khavar and the Mani religion of Turkestan lest their wickedness and degradation should enter into our coreligionist friends and the purity of our religion which is older than that of Rûm, should be dimmed."<sup>6</sup> Because man ought to believe in the good Religion which is the source of piety, that he may exalt himself through righteousness<sup>7</sup> "The doctrine of the Mazdayasnian Religion is to make the world prosperous and of the Yahud Religion is to devastate it"<sup>8</sup>

1 Minôt Khrad S. B. E. Vol V. P. 40

2 S. B. E. xxxi, Ps. 116 and 117,

3 D. P. Dk Vol. I, P. 54.

4 Ibid P. 55,

5 S. B. E. Dd Vol. xviii, P. 187.

6 D. P. Dk, Vol. I, P. 24.

7 D. P. Dk. Vol. V, P. 304.

8 Ibid P. 310.

Thus, then, according to the Zend-Avesta the chief of all good works is to become steadfast in the Mazda-yasnian Religion<sup>1</sup> But to become faithful and steadfast in the Religion it is necessary for man to understand, to compare and select his Religion with thought and wisdom.<sup>2</sup> It behoves us, therefore, that we survey and test and examine and study the important characteristics of our Zoroastrianism, such as is represented in the Zend-Avesta.

But to understand clearly our Zoroastrian Religion it is indispensably necessary to know first and foremost something about its founder and his immediate disciples ; because our Religion and its doctrines depended on what they were. So before proceeding to the main subjects of our Religion, I give here in this chapter as a helpful and useful preliminary some traits of the characters of Zoroaster and his disciples and followers.

What countless abuses and unspeakable miseries Zoroaster and his immediate disciples had been able to banish from the world and how they strove and succeeded in civilizing it ? To enable my reader to understand this, I shall recall here the evils that were prevalent before the advent of Zoroastrianism in Iran and its spread in other parts of the world

Previous to the time of Zoroaster and even for some time after, the natural and the spiritual phenomena of this world were mostly misinterpreted. Men on this earth were mostly corrupt, selfish and interested, and absorbed in the acquisition and enjoyment of earthly things which they saw about them. There were hardly any men among the wise and the good who could dream of the lofty doctrines and precepts which Zoroaster for the first time preached and proclaimed to the world : and by means of which the sages and saints who came after him and chose to adopt all the good that he had left behind him, could master the conscience of men.

1 Saddar S. B. E. xxiv, P. 258.

2 S. B. E. Vol. xxxvi, Ps. 282 and 283,

Even in such civilized parts of the world as Greece and Rome of the period when the Zoroastrian influence and the Zoroastrian civilization had not reached the Greeks and the Romans, the phenomena of Nature were relegated to the domain of the Supernatural. The distinction between the laws and the phenomena of the material universe and the laws and the phenomena of the spiritual world was not known to them.

Hardly can any of the most celebrated philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome stand the examination into their moral conduct by the test of their own teaching, low and defective as it was. Cicero admits that the lives of the philosophers were far removed from their teaching, and that their wisdom was more for ostentation than for the guidance of their lives. Seneca remarks that these sages did not exhibit their doctrines in themselves. He tells us : "Plato, Zeno and the rest taught not how they themselves lived but how men ought to live " Origin truly says of them that their lives were so contrary to their knowledge and they themselves were victims to such ignorance that they attributed it to corrupt creatures which was due to the Supreme Being.

In the writings of Socrates, Alcibiades, Aristotle and Plato, the most soaring minds among the Greeks, we see what the condition of men was who had not been under the influence of Zoroaster and his Religion. Notwithstanding all their investigations they were ignorant of the final end and the real good of their soul, and lacked all true ideas about their Creator. The general spirit of the writings of these men of ancient Greece inspires men with pride and mental elation. The social scheme set forth by the divine man, as Plato was called, embraced the wildest schemes of modern communism absorbing the family with the state, rejecting the marriage ties and advocating the unnamable vices to their last extremes,

To turn from the Greeks to the Romans, we find them enamoured of the product as well as of the sternest of all systems, that of the Stoics. "The man who studies wisdom," if we are to believe Cicero, "thinks of nothing that is abject, of nothing that is humble." If the chief virtue of the Greeks was magnanimity, that of the Romans was a stern fortitude, based on the pantheistic notion of the divinity of the soul. Yet this divinity was limited in practice to men of honour and rank, because, forsooth, the multitude, whether of free men or of slaves, was looked upon with contempt. "Observe", says Cicero, "that although good affections take the name of virtues, that name belongs not properly to all of them. If there be any virtue and of that Cato has removed all doubt, that virtue looks upon all adversities that befall a man as beneath him." And yet that very Cato, that model of Roman virtue was a man of stern and cruel pride who, doubting his wife's chastity, instead of enduring disgrace with courage committed suicide to escape from it. The poets of ancient Greece and Rome deified their own vices and passions in their gods and the philosophers quote them without any reprehension. They did not worship God but His creature.

All the blasphemous beliefs, idolatries, deification and man-worship had come to Rome from Egypt where the development of sin had reached its height. The characteristics of the Egyptians, their pride, their ambition, their tyranny, their immoralities were faithfully repeated and on a larger scale by the Roman people.

Such was the condition of the ancient Egyptians, the Romans and the Greeks, devoid as they were of true religion. They did not believe in God and their pride and ignorance misled them into the worship of the creature rather than that of the Creator and suggested that they themselves were gods, that their souls were 'the parts and particles of God and thus

they came to deify their own selves, and believed neither in this world nor in the life beyond.

Thus in ancient Greece and Rome which were considered as seats of learning and wisdom, in the fertile plains of Egypt, India and China, teeming with population and in lands farther away, races of men lived and died without any true knowledge of God and man. But when the bands of the Zoroastrian priests began to travel and preach and propagate the Zoroastrian principles, much good progress was made in these parts of the world as elsewhere.

Since the cry of distress arose, not from the individual alone but from the entire human race, that help which humanity needed, Ahura-Mazda gave through Zoroaster. In Zoroaster a perfect response was made to the yearnings of the human heart.<sup>1</sup> Zoroaster approved himself as a Messenger of Ahura-Mazda and by his wonderful and prophetic utterances satisfied the yearnings.<sup>2</sup> And thus was fulfilled the prediction which the early Saoshyants had made about his advent, referring to it as the greatest event of the world.<sup>3</sup>

It has been alleged that Zoroaster never really existed and that the record of his life on earth is nothing more or less than a myth. Why, it would be open to us at that rate to deny the existence of any historic personage of yore ; and easier in their case to doubt their existence than in the case of our Prophet. Verily, Zoroaster stands to-day before our eyes like as a real a personage as one living in our times and in our midst. Even if there were extant none of those documents which attest to his earthly existence, the Gâthâs alone would suffice to dissipate all shadow of doubt.<sup>4</sup> The Gâthâs stand

1 Ys. S. B. E. Vol. xxxi. Chap. xxix, 1—9 and D. D. Dk. Vol. xvii, Ps. 62—65.

2 Ys S. B. E. Vol. xxxi, Chap. xxix, 8 and 9; D. D. Dk, Vol. xvii, Ps. 63 and 64,

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, P 618

4 My "Zarathustria and Zarathush-  
manism in the Avesta" Chap. ii.

out before us in all their grandeur. Their origin is the mind of an author who has by precept and example inspired man for centuries past with a multitude of the best ideals.

Zoroaster was born three thousand years ago in his parent's home by the River Darega. Questions about his personality, age and birthplace have been treated at length in the second chapter of my book. "Zarathustra and Zarathustrianism in the Avesta." It is, therefore, needless to discuss them over again in this place.

The questions of Zoroaster's age and place have been discussed by many an Iranian scholar in all earnestness, but they are of secondary importance. To know the precise epoch and place that Zoroaster occupied in history, is considerably less important than to know Zoroaster himself, to look into his very soul, to comprehend his spirit, to see how and what he thought, felt, purposed, preached and practised. I am afraid that too much discussion on minor and contentious controversies as about Zoroaster's birth-place and age has done us, in a way, a dis-service, because it has distracted the attention of scholars from such important question as the character and life-work of Zoroaster. If in debating questions as to where and when Zoroaster was born and, in the fervour of these controversies, we overlooked the character of his mind or the spirit that moved within him, how poorly and unprofitably should we be employed? Who is it that understands, appreciates and loves Zoroaster? Is it he that can settle his birth place and his age or he to whom the soul of that good man is laid open, who comprehends and sympathises with and loves him?

Zoroaster was born in a noble and rich family. The environments in which Zoroaster was born, show that the fact of a man's birth in a great and rich family has not after all

a bad influence on the future course of his life. On the other hand, indigence and obscure birth are not the factors which urge men always to a great or good life. Prophet Zoroaster was born in the house of his rich father, Pourushaspa and yet his future career was not that of a man given up to worldiness.<sup>1</sup>

Zoroaster's mother was Dugdáv.<sup>2</sup> He was conceived in the womb of a human mother, by her brought forth into the world and fed at her breast during his infancy.<sup>3</sup> He was born in the same way as any mortal being ; there was nothing supernatural about his birth. " God in order to give joy to the good creation, had, from the beginning of the world, created, in pure and luminous essence, the holy Zaithosht as an associate of Ameshaspenda endowed with all their good qualities, thoughtful and fully attentive. And his essence was made in the Spiritual World fitted for (the task of) proselyting, and of propagating the religion throughout the world. And at the right time he was sent down to the world as a man, invested with the earthly body. And he was born of his father, Pourushaspa—a descendant of Jamshed and of his mother Dogdo."<sup>4</sup>

We are told by the Zend-Avesta that Zoroaster had human nature in its reality and completeness. He had a true human soul and a true human body. It belonged to his essential truth to show himself what he, in reality, was. He seemed to be human ; he was and claimed to be human. He professed himself a man and as a mortal being admitted his own dependence on Ahura-Mazda, his Lord.

Zoroaster was not divine. The Zend-Avesta admits that he was not God ; that he was a creature and not the substance itself of the Supreme Being. Zoroaster was a man personally

1 S. B. E. Vend 'xix Ps. 211 and 212, Ys. ix, 13 & 14.

2 S. B. E. xlvii, P. 122.

3 S. B. E. xlvii, 29.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, Ps. 612 and 613.



and substantially distinct from the Supreme God, Ahura-Mazda. It is unnecessary to give or multiply quotations in proof of the fact which neither he nor the original Scriptures dispute. Traditions, likewise, distinguish between Ahura-Mazda, the Creator and His most favoured and favourite creature, Zoroaster. They clearly declare the personal distinctness and differences between the invisible and higher Nature and the nature which is cognisable by the senses. Zoroaster was merely a manifestation of the highest human goodness and was the noblest of divine gifts to the world. Ahura Mazda spoke to Zarathustra thus: "O Zarthust! I have created no one better than thee in the world and after thee I shall likewise not create one, thou art my chosen one, and I have made this world apparent on account of thee. And all these people whom I have created, and all these monarchs who have existed and do exist have always maintained the hope that I should create thee in their days, so that they should accept the Religion and their souls should attain to the Supreme Heaven. "Nevertheless I have created thee at the present time, in the middle period. For whatever is in the middle is more previous and better and more valuable in the same manner as the heart is in the middle of the body and is unquestionably very precious. Therefore I have created thee in the middle period and have sent thee to a monarch a friend of knowledge and a friend of Religion. I have made thee aware of the whole of knowledge. While thou hast all this greatness that I have given to thee, O Zarthust! I enact a precept for thee that "every good work which thou art able to do to-day, do not postpone for to-morrow, and accomplish with thy own hand the counsel of thy soul."<sup>1</sup>

Zoroaster never required at the hand of his disciples nor did his disciples at the hands of their followers, a

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1 Saddar lxxxii, I—II.

dogmatic confession of belief in his divinity. He did not, like Christ, by every possible contrivance strive to be accounted God. Whatever instructions Christ gave, whatever so-called wonderous miracles he performed, were all impelled by this paramount intention. Christ rewarded with the most illustrious distinctions those who openly acknowledged him to be God. He reproved those who expressed any hesitation on the subject. What self-interest more unworthy can there be than a desire unjustly to usurp the Godhead ?

Compare, on the other hand, the teaching of our sacred Volume, the Zend-Avesta ! We are told by it, that King Jamshed of the Peshdadian epoch aspired to a like pre-eminence and employed various devices with this end in view. By the use of diverse expedients he tried to gull the world into paying him adoration. But we know how severely he was punished for such a selfish aim and end. He and his subjects that obeyed such an illegitimate demand of their king, were condemned as the most wicked and the most impious men that were born in the universe. The punishment was, as we read in Yasht XIX, most exorbitant because the pride of Jamshed deserved it.

It was pride that implanted in Yima's (Jamshed) heart, through ostentation and vain-glory, envy of his own Creator, Ahura. Not the slightest taint of any such vice was ever found in Zoroaster and his disciples. On the contrary, they were all highly respectful, sincere, unassuming and most humble. They, by their words and deeds, in public and private, by their character and conduct, showed and declared that Ahura and Ahura alone should be worshipped as the one God.

It will be seen that in our original Scriptures the beginning and the end of every thing in the natural world is shown according to the constitution and course of things or according to

the known laws of Nature. It would be difficult to show from these records any attempt to prove that the birth or the death of any man, even of the most favoured of God, was ever out of the established order. Zoroaster is not described, like Christ in the Bible, as having been born without a fatherhood, or as having arisen on the third day after death from the grave buried deep under the earth. The elements of such Christian miracles are absent from the Zend-Avesta. Such miracles within the established laws about man's birth and death imply that Ahura-Mazda, the establisher of the laws and order, is a Being of deficient intelligence and limited power.

There are no exceptional cases in the operation of Nature's laws. In the case of an Intelligent Supreme Being there could not have existed any over-whelming necessity for such a flagrant violation of His laws, which we know, are indential always and of universal application. It is a contradiction in terms to allege that an intelligent action can be performed without intelligence. All the acts of God are adaptations of means to ends. The Zoroastrian saints entertained too profound a reverence for Ahura-Mazda, too high a conception of His wisdom and power to admit for one moment that this original plan of creation was so imperfect that it became necessary to supplement it by miracles.

It is a well-known fact that, partly from a desire to satisfy pious curiosity and partly with ethical intent, there grew up in the later Avestan literature and in the Pahlavi traditions a good crop of legendary lore around the names of some important personages. It is therefore but natural that the story of Zoroaster might have been largely developed by this process of embellishment. Some of these additions are very extravagant, fanciful, imaginary or based at best on a fanciful understanding of some slight detail of the sacred narrative. It is needless to say that they do not all embody real historic

information and their chief utility is in what example it affords of the pious popular credulity of the times.

Our authentic Scriptural Records do not give us every detail of Zoroaster's life. However they furnish us the main outlines of his life and character. It is a notable fact that in the circumstances and events of the lives of Zoroaster and of his illustrious disciples as mentioned in the Records, there is nothing as has proved a stumbling block to the reason or understanding of men of knowledge and science for the last thirty centuries.

It is declared in the Dinkard, Book V, that Zoroaster laughed out right at birth.<sup>1</sup> So did also the whole universe rejoice in his birth : "In (his) birth and growth the waters and the plants grew ; in (his) birth and growth all the creatures of the good creations cried out, Hail."<sup>2</sup> "And when the entire body of Zarathustra was brought forth, a panic fell upon the demons and the demons fled in a hurry to the evil abode ; there was increase of light among the creatures, and the rejoicing of the entire creation of the Good Spirit and the pronouncement of happy times. And Ahura-Mazda in order to protect Zarathushtra held him in beatitude. And Ardivisura, Ashi and the Glory of the Kyanians spoke into Zarathustra "Devote (thy) thought unto the wise one !" And Zarathushtra replied spiritually thereto : 'I am a worshipper of Ahura-Mazda,.....I am the apostle of Ahura-Mazda, and am sent by him.'<sup>3</sup>

Zoroaster was beautiful and well-formed. He was strong in body and in mind. He was so strong that he could swing stones as big as a house.<sup>4</sup> The title of Athraivan, Rathaestar, Vâstryos and Hutokhsh, given to him in our Scriptures, imply

1 also Zs xiv, 12, 13

2 S. B. E., Yt xiii, P 202 and see vend. xix. 46 (143)

3 D. D. Dk. Vol. xvii, Ps 53-54.

4 S. B. E. Yt. xvii, P. 275; also S. B. E., Vend. xix, 4-9.

that Zoroaster was a man in whom the synchronism of developement, physical and psychical was perfect<sup>1</sup> He had a very harmonious development of natural as well as spiritual powers: "Thou art beautiful, O Zarathushtra! Thou art well-formed, O Spitama! Strong are thy legs and long are thy arms. Glory is given to thy body and long cheerfulness to thy soul....."<sup>2</sup> "This which is declared that even before the coming of Zarathosht to a conference there is manifested in him a mind which is more capacious than the whole world and more exalted than every worldly possession, with an understanding whose strength is perfectly selected, an intellect of all acquiring power and a sagacity of all deciding ability; .....and the full desire for righteousness, the efficacious diligence and authority, and even the superiority in mightiness and the grandeur of the priestly glory. And also the handsomeness of body and completeness of strength which are in the character of these four classes....., which are priesthood, warriorship, husbandry and artisanship." "..... and through the prompt ability of Zarathosht of the Spitamas you would expound the Religion of Ahura-Mazda and Zarathosht."<sup>3</sup>

Zoroaster was energetic, diligent and studious. "Thou didst cause, O Zarathushtra all the demon-gods to vanish in the ground who aforetime flew about this earth in human shape, thou who has been the strongest and the staunchest, the most active and the swiftest and the most victoribus in the two spirits' creatures."<sup>4</sup> During his boyhood and youth in the home of his parents on the River Darega he laboured much. Often did he hold conference by the side of the river with Ahura-Mazda and the Ameshaspentas; "..... We, the Amesha-spentas, will come and show thee, O Zara-

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1 Yt, xiii, 88

2 Yt, xvii, 22.

3 S. B. E. Vol xlvii, Dk. Ps 46 and 72.

4 Ys, ix, 15, Ys, xxix, I, 8 & 9.

thushtra ! the way to that world, to that Spiritual World, to long happiness of the soul in Heaven.....<sup>1</sup> He was frequently sitting on the upper bank of Darega in long and deep contemplation and meditation on Nature and Nature's Creator.<sup>2</sup> He constantly employed himself in the close study of the natural and spiritual phenomena of the world. His life in Bactria and especially in the court of King Vistâsp was one of incessant toil.<sup>3</sup> During his public ministry exhausting labours fell to his lot day after day.<sup>4</sup> Thus Zoroaster sanctified work by his own example.

Zoroaster also sanctified family-life by himself becoming one of the great Zoroastrian family-men. The home of Zoroaster on the River Darega sets before us the ideal of a Zoroastrian household. Zoroaster was married to Hvôvi the beloved daughter of Farshaoster who belonged to the most noble and rich family of the Hvôgvas. Her name seems to have been derived from her family name Hvôgva. As she was the most favourite and revered child of her father Farshaoster, so was she the most devoted and reverent wife of her husband Zarathushtra.<sup>5</sup> Although she herself was so much revered and blest, she always spoke about or addressed her husband as her supreme lord or master. She was the most submissive and staunch disciple and follower of Zarathushtra. She was so enthusiastic and ardent in helping and supporting his great Cause that she often prayed for its promotion and success. Zarathushtra had by her three sons and three daughters, namely, Isatvastar, Urvatatnar, Khuished'cheher, Freni, Thriti and Pouruchishti<sup>6</sup> Zarathush-

1 S. B. E. Vol. xxiii, P. 336; also D. D. Dk. Vol. xiii, 56, S. B. E. Vol. xlvii, Dk. Ps. 40 and 50 etc.

2 S. B. E. Vol. iv, Vend. xix, P. 213.

3 S. B. E. Vol. xlvii, Ps. 64—74.

4 Ibid and the Gathas xxix, 2—9 etc.

5 Ys, li. 17, Yt. xiii, 139, Yt. xvi, 15, S. B. E. Vol. xxxvii, Dk. Bk. ix, Chap. xlv, 17 etc.

6 Yt. xiii, 98 and 139 and Vend ii, 43; Ys, xxiii, 2; xxv, 6; etc.

tra lived all his life with his Hovôvi and his children most peacefully and in perfect harmony.<sup>1</sup>

1. Here I should like to assure my reader on the strength of the most authentic and old parts of our Scriptures that Zarathushtra had married only one in his life-time and that we do not find in them even the faintest trace of his having had any undue intercourse with any other maiden (shâhzan) or widow (chakarzan). By reading all the important Avestan and Pahlavi books, covering a period of about two thousand years, we come to the certain conclusion that Zarathushtra was a strict monogamist and that he, his immediate disciples, even his powerful and rich patron and supporter, King Vistâsp, as well as their remote successors and their numerous faithful followers, had always preached and practised monogamy. All their fundamental doctrines, principles and precepts as well as their characters and examples of which we read especially in the Gâthâs, in the Dinkard and in other important parts of our sacred Literature, are incontrovertible proofs of their intense hatred and severe condemnation of polygamy, prostitution, debauchery, adultery, lust and immoderate carnal desires. It is quite impossible to believe, to think, even to imagine that such ardent lovers and admirers of Asha, such preservers and promoters of the Righteous Order in man and in the world, as Zarathushtra, Vistâsp, Medhyo-mâh, Farshaostar, Jâmâsp, and the rest, could allow or persuade themselves to lead their followers by their teachings and examples to such immoral and unnatural acts as have been proved from generation to generation to have been the main source of disunion, discord, confusion, chaos, and destruction of peace and prosperity and of health and happiness amongst men.

It should be observed that the Religion of our holy Prophet Zarathushtra, is based on the observations

and facts of nature. Nature tells us that one woman is for one man. One man, the first half, and one woman, the second half, make complete one whole human nature or being. Another indubitable fact presented to us by Nature is that the number of women in the world does not exceed the number of men to such an extent as to allow or enable men to have more wives than one.

Now as we examine our important sacred books, we find that the two words that signify and are translated by the most experienced scholars as "husband" and "wife" occur together in numerous places and in every place each of the words is found in the singular number. This fact and the fact that on numerous pages of the Zend-Avesta severe condemnations and punishments are prescribed for debauchery, prostitution, adultery, lust and all sorts of unnatural and illegitimate sexual intercourse, prove that all such immoral ideas and acts were most repulsive and abominable to the true Zoroastrians of every age from the epoch of Zarathushtra down to our own times. It cannot be denied that the present faithful followers of the Zoroastrian Religion are in no way less keen on condemning and punishing those amongst us who commit such heinous crimes.

However, we must admit that there were some exceptions. But the exceptions prove the rule. Where in this material world do we not find such exceptions? In every age, in every country and in every race, class and caste of men some irreligious, immoral, lusty men have been found who have preferred to live and make others live like lower animals or lusty beasts. We are sure that our own generation does not lack such two-footed beasts.

In spite of all the facts I have given above, is it not most absurd,

As Zoroaster recommended and urged upon his countrymen family life, so did he also recommend and urge upon them settled social life by himself becoming their greatest spiritual Leader, Teacher and Benefactor. He proved himself the greatest Reformer by promoting through his superior teachings, industry, order, unity, peace and prosperity amongst

most foolish, most shameful and sinful for a true or nominal Zoroastrian or for non-Zoroastrian to attribute publicly such immoral ideas and acts to the most exalted personage, our most holy Prophet Zarathushtra of the most lofty principles and of the sublimest character and conduct and thus to wound the religious feelings of his faithful followers, the Zoroastrians of our own day. What right, what reason, what authority, what motive has he to give preference to such unreliable works as the *Bundahish*, the *Vign-gard-i-Dinik*, and the *Revayats* of much later and the latest times over the authentic sources of information of the earlier and the earliest periods. What good could he do to himself, to our community or to our sacred Literature by unduly giving so much importance to the most mutilated texts of the *Vign-gard-i-Dinik* of an unimportant and unreliable author and to the *Bundahish*, a book mostly containing a confused mass of matters, imaginary, mythological and legendary. "The *Bundahish*" says Dr E West, the well-known Pahlavi scholar, in his introduction to the 5th volume of the *Sacred Books of the East*, "... appears to be a collection of fragments relating to the cosmogony, mythology, and legendary history taught by the Mazdayasnian tradition but which cannot be considered in any way a complete treatise on these subjects" The authors of both the Pahlavi works seem to have been utterly illinformed or have stated their own imaginary ideas and inference.

We admit that we do not find a full and perfect accounts of the life of Zarathushtra in any of the

books of our extant Literature : evidently because he lived and flourished in the most remote age when the sources of conveying and spreading information and knowledge were very rare and the arts of writing and printing were perfectly unknown. We need not therefore wonder if the authors who wrote more than two thousand years after the death of Zarathushtra, could write only what they had simply guessed, imagined or had inferred from wrong informations about Zarathushtra, his birth-place, his age, his marriage, wife, children and such other important events of his life (See the 2nd chapter of my volume "Zarathushtra and Zarathushtrianism in the Avesta" Ps 52-55) In order to give some idea as to how unauthoritative and inaccurate are the writers to whose statements so much importance is attached, I give the following remarks and quotations of our distinguished and highly respected Pahlavi scholar Dr. E. West. In his foot-note in connection with the share of the property left by will for a wife who may be a privileged one .....he says : " This does not imply that a man might have more wives than one, but that wives are of five classes according to the circumstances of the marriage. A *pâdakshâh* or 'privileged' wife is one who was a maiden married with the consent of her parents who have another child. A *yûkân* or 'only child' wife differs from the last merely by being an only child, and having, therefore, to give up her first child to her parents. A *satar* or 'adopted' wife is one who was a maiden enabled to marry by



the cattle breeders, the agriculturists, the warriors and the artisans of primitive Iran. Undoubtedly, the civilization of primitive Iran and of other ancient countries that were in contact with it, was due to the spread and establishment of the good principles and precepts which Zoroaster had preached and practised.

It has not been pretended in any authentic quarter that Zoroaster was enriched for a single ray of his knowledge from Athens or Alexandria, from the Ganges or from the disciples of Confucious. He did not, like philosophers or the active spirits of the middle ages, spend his life in perpetual transit between one lecturer or teacher of reputation and another. He was not

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receiving a dowry from the relatives of a man who has died unmarried on condition that half of her children shall belong to the deceased. A karkar or 'serving' wife is a widow who marries again. A khud-sarai or 'self-disposing' wife is one who marries without her parents' consent" (S. B. E. Vol. XVIII P. 135, note).

Now may I ask : What do we learn from the passages quoted from the Revayats which give explanations of the five kinds of marriages or the five classes of wives; the privileged wife, the yûkân wife, the satar wife, the serving wife, khûd-sarai or self-disposing wife? In what way do these explanations support or confirm the unfounded and false statements of the authors of the Bundahish and the Vigir-gard-i-Dinik? In answer to these questions it is quite sufficient to quote the adverse remarks of the most reliable and learned savant Dr. West who has made his name immortal in connection with our Pahlavi literature. In his foot-notes of Dâdistân-i-Dinik in connection with the words "... for a wife who may be a privileged one," he says: "This does not imply that a man might

have more wives than one, but these wives are of five classes according to the circumstances of the marriage .....". Again in his foot-notes of the Bundahish XXXII, 7, he remarks. "Instead of this sentence (Fund. XXXII, 7) the Vigir-gard-i-Dinik ( PP 21 and 22 ) has the following, which appears to rest upon a misinterpretation of the text - 'And Zarathusht, the righteous had three wives; all three were in the life-time of Zarathusht.....'" (S. B. E. Vol. V P 143).

In spite of all that I have related above, if any one, a Zoroastrian, or a non-Zoroastrian, a scholar or a student were to persist in misrepresenting Zarathushtra and his sublime character and conduct, we should consider and call him the greatest calumniator and scandalizer of the holiest man whom we praise and honour as "the lord and master of the world,.....as the wisest of all beings, the best ruling, the brightest, the most glorious, the most worthy of glorification amongst all beings, whom we call well-desired and worthy of sacrifice and prayer as much as any being can be, in the perfection of his holiness." (S. B. E. Vol. XXIII P. 229).

Goethe, continually enriching and refining his conceptions by contact with a long succession of intellectual friends. He mingled not with great thinkers who could mould educated opinion.

Zoroaster was exceptionally endowed spiritually, as well as intellectually and morally. He was far above his race in every attribute which contributes towards human perfection. The first and the most important characteristic which distinguished him from all other men of whom history has given any account, consisted in his intuitive perception of the laws of the human soul. History shows that from time to time there have been born into this world persons so exceptionally endowed by nature with intellectual powers in certain directions that they can be appropriately designated by the term "prodigies." The phenomenal manifestations of these prodigies are usually confined to some one sphere of mental activity. Thus there are musical prodigies, prodigies in art, in poetry and mathematics. The salient characteristic which is common to all, is that each one appears to be endowed with an intuitive perception of the laws of nature which appertain to his speciality. Thus the musical prodigy intuitively perceives the laws pertaining to the harmony of sounds, the mathematical prodigy perceives by intuition the laws of numbers. His power of intuition is demonstrated by the accuracy of his answers.

It is easy likewise to account for the knowledge which Zoroaster possessed of those laws of Nature which appertain to the functions, powers and destiny of the human soul. He had an intuitive perception of those laws and his knowledge of them was accurate. This was, I say, his most important spiritual endowment. It was this that enabled him to think and speak as never man did or will ever think and speak. Zoroaster had almost the omniscient wisdom bestowed on him by Ahura-Mazda.<sup>1</sup> "Thou hast never transgressed our path in inspiration (Yân), nor in questions, nor in public (frâj)

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1 S. B. E. Vol. V. P. 192,

announcement even when revealing the Religion unto others, nor in anything else, O Spítamân ! in respect of ourselves who are Ameshaspentas ;.....”<sup>1</sup> “Further, debators of the highest class, who entered into discussion with the prophet Zarathosht acknowledged him, from the way in which he confuted their contradictory arguments, to be (a possessor) of transcendent qualities and a giver of wonderfully excellent judgements. In the same way the holy Zarthosht, by means of his glorious deeds came safely out from all conflicts. In him were manifest all the traits and characteristics of the prophets and of the glorious messengers. And owing to this supreme testimony and evidence, the people acknowledged him to be the Prophet of God.”<sup>2</sup>

Zoroaster was a master of every science and as such had a perfect knowledge of the worldly as well as of the spiritual existences.<sup>3</sup> He had a perfect knowledge of their attributes and powers and of the normal relations which those attributes and powers sustain to each other, to humanity and to the Creator. He had clearly and explicitly manifested his valuable treasure of knowledge by his highest appreciation of the perfect and true Mazdayasni Religion.<sup>4</sup> Again he had unquestionably manifested his perfect knowledge in his own perfect moral and religious character.

Zoroaster was the first man to teach his fellow creatures that any man under normal conditions can attain a perfect moral and religious character. “The Divine Being has determined mankind as capable of attaining to good works.”<sup>5</sup> But the knowledge of the laws, both natural and spiritual, is indispensable for that attainment and for the avoidance of the penalties and pains attending the infraction of the laws.

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<sup>1</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. xvii, P. 60.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, P. 616.

<sup>3</sup> S. B. E. Vol. xxiv, P. 40.

<sup>4</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. ii, P. 125.

<sup>5</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. xvii, P. 59.

Morality and religion are the phenomena of the human soul. They have normal relations to every other attribute of the human soul. To discern these relations and to maintain them a good knowledge of the laws of the soul is necessary. Zoroaster was a master of the science of the soul. His perfect moral and religious character was the outcome of such mastery. "O Thou Righteousness ! When shall I (by means ) of knowledge see Thee, the Divine Mind and the abode of the Beneficent Ahura....."<sup>1</sup> "Zoroaster was superior to all men in thought and intellect and was superior in character and conduct, superior in good thoughts, good words and good deeds."<sup>2</sup> He was master in natural observation and in psychical experience, in knowledge and in morals. His observation, his experience and knowledge helped him to his final beliefs and conclusions. And hence his religion is not a mere idealism ; it is an induction from facts.

Thus, then, Zoroaster was for all men the leader of their mental, moral and spiritual life, as Gayômarad was the head and origin of the physical and natural life of the whole race of mankind.<sup>3</sup> Ahura-Mazda had established Zarathushtra above men as He had established Tishtrya above all stars<sup>4</sup> ".....Zarathushtra.....was the holiest in holiness in all the living world, the best ruling in exercising rule, the brightest in brightness, the most glorious in glory, the most victorious in victory."<sup>5</sup> "I am Spitama Zarathushtra who, first of mortals, recited the praise of the excellent Asha (the Righteous Order) and offered up sacrifice unto Ahura-Mazda and the Amesha-spentas....."<sup>6</sup> "Zarathosht is the chief of the religion of Khaniras and also of all other religions ; he is the chief of the world of the righteous, and it is said that the whole religion was received by them from Zarthosht."<sup>7</sup> "Among the great Dastoores

1 S. B. E. Ys xxviii, 5 or 6.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. ii, P. 125.

3 Yt. xiii, 87; Dd. S. B. E. Vol. xviii, P. 13, Dk. D P. Dk. Vol. Vh. P. 428—429.

4 Yt. VIII, 44.

5 Yt. xix, 79.

6 Yt. xvii, 18.

7 S. B. E. Vol. V, Bund, Ps, 115—116.

the greatest Dastoor was Spitaman Zarthosht who gave men the best knowledge about the soul.<sup>1</sup> The heads of the Mazdayasnian faith obtained a knowledge of the saving faith as his disciples at the hands of that holy and true teacher of religious knowledge, the prophet Zarathusht.....''<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, Zoroaster was the greatest spiritual force produced by our world. He was a colossal religious genius. He was the greatest Law-giver, the greatest Teacher, the greatest of prophets, the unique Prophet who revealed perfectly the Mind and the Will of Ahura-Mazda. He was the greatest exponent of human as well as divine character.

As the author of a complete and unique Revelation, Zoroaster stands above all other prophets with the various dogmas and doctrines which they preached at different epochs. Zoroaster was in many essential particulars unlike all other prophets of whom we have any records. With the exception of a few ideas on moral subjects, has the Religion proclaimed by Zoroaster anything in common with the creeds of ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, India, China and other countries of the world? They all differed from the Religion of Zoroaster in their system and structure, in range and compass, in life and action, in spirit and aim. They all primarily pointed to a material rather than to a spiritual kingdom.

Zoroaster was made known to his people as the longed-for Prophet, as the Messenger of Ahura-Mazda by means of the holiness which shone forth from his human life and led many a holy saint to perceive the truth of his nearness to Ahura-Mazda: "This man alone has listened to our enunciations, Zarathushtra Spitama! Our mighty and completed acts of grace he desires to announce for us, for (me) Ahura-Mazda and Righteousness; therefore I will give him the good

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, 484.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 479,

place of such an one as speaks." <sup>1</sup> "So do I (Ahura-Mazda) announce thee (Zarathusht) as Ratu as regards whatever righteousness proceeds from righteous enlightenment; thou art likewise the most valued, and thou art the most righteous, and thou art the most intelligent; and thou shalt announce the Religion of Ahura-Mazda unto the creatures of all kinds..... So likewise Zarathushtra proclaimed life free from the control of the demons when he uttered just these (words) thus: 'As is the will of the Spiritual Lord:....,' " <sup>2</sup> "Forth to thee will I, who am the creator Ahura-Mazda, come in both existences, as assistance; thou becomest worthy, O Zarathusht !.....through the gratification of me who am Ahura-Mazda..... "I will gratify thee, O righteous Zarthusht ! in that best existence." <sup>3</sup>

Ahura-Mazda spoke to Zarathushtra thus : "Extol the Divine Being, aspire to union with Him,.....and practise good thoughts and good words and good deeds and abstain from evil thoughts evil words and evil deeds.....Maintain this Religion with firm faith, because by the help of this Religion I who am Ahura-Mazda shall be with thee, the omniscient wisdom will be thine, to thy discipleship shall come Maidhyô-Mâh, and Parshat-gao, and Saenâ and Kai-Vistâsp, and Farshaostra and Jâmâsp, the instructor of public duties..... and thanks will be owned by thee ..... Ahura-Mazda demonstrated the Religion objectively unto Zarathushtra and the latter accepted it on reflection and faith....." <sup>4</sup> "That is the nature of him who is an angelic being among men, bipeds; his is the excellence of the sacred beings and the perfection through worthiness towards Ahura-Mazda, whereby (his) friendship (with Ahura) is embellished; so that the sacred beings on account of his higher exaltedness than that of any one of those that exist, of those that have existed, and of those that will exist, shall carry abroad the

1 S. B. E. Vol. xxxi, Ys xxix, 8.  
2 D. D. Dk. Vol. xvii, P, 52.

3 S. B. E. xxxvii, Ps. 268—269.  
4 D. D. Dk. Vol. xvii, 54 and 55.

good report of his advent for that friendship with Ahura-Mazda....."<sup>1</sup>

When we contemplate the wondrous civilization of primitive Iran, its advance in the science of government, the beauty and grace of its advancement in the science of government, the beauty and grace of its literature, the refinement of its philosophy, the grandeur and nobility of its architecture, it does not seem incomprehensible that in such a place and at such a time there should have appeared a prophet so great and world-renowned as Zoroaster.

Zoroaster was the first man who discovered and formulated the truths concerning the spiritual order of Nature and taught them to the world. He was the man who first knew and first taught what was good<sup>2</sup>. He claimed the fullest authority to preach and teach. He revealed and spoke as one having power.<sup>3</sup> Yet he attributed this to his heavenly Creator, Ahura-Mazda and always declared directly and indirectly that his power was derived neither from man nor from the State nor from any society or school of thought but from Ahura-Mazda.<sup>4</sup>

This consciousness in him of a right to speak and teach enabled him to get immense weight for his words and teachings: "He, Zarathushtra, the friend (of God and men), giver of wisdom and constant guider of his own tongue (to the true or straight path) lifts up his voice and recites Māthras with righteousness and homage (and says): 'Any one (who may wish) can teach with his good mind my regulations or truths contained in the Holy Words—Māthras.'"<sup>5</sup>

So it should be said to the great credit of Zoroaster and his disciples that the phenomena of the so-called spiriticism or miracle did not constitute with them a factor for the promul-

1 Ibid P. 53

2 Yt. xiii, 88.

3 Ys. xxix, 8 and xxxi, 2.

4 Ys. xxix, 10 and 11 Ys. xxxi, 2  
and 3 and Ys. L, 7.

5 Ys. L, 6.

gation of their Religion. No wonders were offered to the people as have been under other religions. Their proselyting engine was not miraculous power but the incontrovertible truth of their doctrines taught with a good mind and a good or righteous heart.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, Zoroaster's whole life was a protest against all sorts of false or deceitful beliefs and practices. He hated and condemned all sorts of occult arts as did his immediate disciples and his remote successors and followers. He did not encourage in his followers the idea that any phenomena could proceed from communication with some invisible mysterious spirits. He was not tolerant of any sort of mysterious manifestations, either psychic or physical, such as Christianity and Mohammadanism used as aggressive powers carrying with them what was supposed by the credulous and superstitious people to be demonstrative proofs of their divine source.

The authors of the Gâthâs as well as of the later Avesta do not provoke in men the slightest vestige of the spirit of scepticism. They hate and condemn witchcraft, magic and sorcery. One never meets in their teachings the enunciation of such dogma that Zoroaster wrought his wonderous works outside and in defiance of the natural laws. We find no statement in the Zend-Avesta like the following from the Bible : " Except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe."

The evidence of the truths which Zoroaster expounded, was not through the medium of miracles. He attempts to explain to his followers the underlying principles of a good life. He said that every one of them was capable of comprehending them and of doing great things by complying with the conditions which he prescribed for them.<sup>2</sup> It will thus be seen that faith in the Zoroastrian Religion has been perpetua-

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1 Ibid.

2 Ys. I, 6 ; Ys. xlv, 1—5. Ys. xxx, 2 and 3 etc.



ted by the state of full and correct comprehension of the psychic laws and principles. Zoroaster did never say like Christ: "I have many things to say unto you but you cannot bear them now."<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Zoroaster spoke to his people what they could readily understand and did not refrain from giving them the knowledge he possessed.<sup>2</sup> His teaching was not addressed to any one special class. It was not confined to the rich nor to the poor. According to the last line of Yasna L, 6, not only could any one of his hearers comprehend and understand his Holy Words or the principles contained in them but could also teach with his good mind. So simple and easily comprehensible was his teaching.

Zoroaster appeared before the public and bade all men to rally to his standard.<sup>3</sup> People came from all sides in large numbers and listened to him eagerly and attentively.<sup>4</sup> King Gustasp, Queen Hutaosa and their ministers Farshaostar and Jâmâsp and Medhyômâh and the rest who were his immediate disciples and staunch supporters, belonged to the aristocracy of wealth and intelligence of their days. Thus, Zoroaster preached before the high and the low, before his kinsmen and friends, before the learned as well as the unlearned, before all those who came from "near and afar."<sup>5</sup> The gradual transformation of thought and ideal which his preaching wrought in the higher ranks of society, ended by influencing for the good the lot of the middle and the lower classes. All who heard him, recognised in his teachings a force potent enough to rescue the world from the horrors of barbarism.<sup>6</sup> They felt that some great and wonderful spiritual power was working in their midst. In all the questions which are supremely vital in this life of ours, Zoroaster's teachings are

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1 John xvi, 12.

2 Ys. xxx, 2 and 3; Ys. xlv. 1—5;  
Ys. L, 6.

3 Ys. xxx 10 and 11.

4 Ys. xxx, 1 and 2; and Ys. xlv, 1.

5 Ys. xxxi, 12; Ys. xlv, 1 and 2; LI,  
15—21.

6 LI, 12—21.

the light of our path. He furnishes answers to all the yearnings which man feels for clearer insight into the deep problems of our worldly and future existence. A sublime assurance of truth characterises in fact all his teachings. The true Religion of humanity owes its fundamental principles to Zoroaster and to him alone. The foundation of the true Religion is his work.

Now let us inquire : what was the mission of Zoroaster? To sum up that august mission in two words : It was to establish holiness and cleanliness and to destroy vice and uncleanness. Vohûmanô asked Zarathusht : "O Zarathusht of the Spîtamâs about what is thy foremost distress ;.....about what is thy foremost endeavour and for what is the tendency of thy desire." The reply of Zarathusht was : "About righteousness I consider my foremost distress, about righteousness my foremost endeavour, for righteousness my tendency of my desire." "Among the existences righteousness is more my desire and my wish is that I may become aware of the will of the sacred beings and may practise so much righteousness as they exhibit to me in the pure existence."<sup>1</sup> "And therefore do Thou, O Ahura-Mazda ! satisfy my wish with the attainments of Thy Good Mind, which Thou dost know to be derived from Righteousness. "I will protect Thy Righteous Order and Good Mind (within us) for ever. And do Thou therefore teach me from Thyself.....that I may declare it forth to ( the people around me) by what laws the moral universe is governed and according to what laws it arose."<sup>2</sup>

The former Soshyants (Benefactors) had anticipated the idea of a spiritual kingdom. But it was Zoroaster who first of all proclaimed a spiritual kingdom with its new laws and principles.<sup>3</sup> He unfolds before our intellect a new consciousness of God, a

1 S. B. E. vol. xlvii, Ps. 49, & 156.

3 Ys xxxv, 5-7.

2 S. B. E. Vol. xxxi, Ys xxviii,  
11 and 12.

new perception of our soul and spiritual nature, new ideas of perfection and progress, new convictions of Immortality and a new Heaven with its unending felicity and reward for the righteous.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Zoroaster made definite what had been vague ; he put into a concrete form what had been abstract.

Zoroaster proclaimed a God of love and benevolence (Mainyuôspenishta). Zoroaster's early training was in his father's house where he was brought up as a Mazdayasnian. He was imbued with a belief in the God of the Mazdayasnians. But he was the first and foremost to proclaim a conception of the Deity so lofty, so grand and so ennobling and at the same time in such perfect harmony with the highest instincts of civilized humanity that it constitutes a strong link in the chain of evidences of his powers of intuitive perception. This conception was far too lofty to mislead him into the error of his predecessors. His intuitive knowledge of the laws of the soul naturally prevented him from placing himself in a state of mind where he could possibly be dominated by false ideas. Zoroaster was a strict monotheist. His whole life of thought and feeling, of will and action was in unfaltering harmony with the Law or Will of Ahura-Mazda.<sup>2</sup>

Zoroaster's first and sole desire was that men should believe in one God, Ahura-Mazda and honour and glorify Him in the way which he had shown. He firmly believed that through the fulfilment by men of the above-named desire it was possible to restore perfect order alike in the life of the individual as well as of the community<sup>3</sup>.

Zoroaster also taught the doctrine of Immortality and promulgated a code of ethics for the guidance of the human race, the fundamental principles of which were universal charity and friendship and peace of mankind. That Zoroas-

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1 Ys xxxi, 4, 6, 8; Ys Li, etc.      3 Ys, xxxi, 3-6, etc.

2 Ys xxix, 4 and 10; Ys, xxx, 7.

Ys. xlv, 1; xlv,  
1-3; Ys. xlv. 8-11.

ter's conceptions of the attributes of God and his code of ethics have never been and can never be improved upon, is what no one rationally gifted will undertake to disclaim.

Zoroaster always ardently desired and required his disciples and followers to accept and act upon his teachings, to embrace all the moral obligations which he preached. The lives of Zoroaster's disciples and followers afford the most convincing practical proof of the sublime character of his teachings. The purpose of his great mission has thus been fulfilled practically and perfectly in the life and character of every man who has adopted in true conscience his teachings and religion.

In Zoroaster we have a model teacher ; we find all the best qualities with which a teacher must be endowed. His keen eyes discerned every ill-regulated propensity in the hearts of men and he combated it in a way which ensured success. He taught men the spiritual and moral laws in a way best suited to their understanding and comprehension. It was not the way of Zoroaster to define the virtue that he taught. He did not follow the method of science ; because science is a laboured and a limited method of teaching, obscure to the multitude, taught with effort and always raising more questions than it solves. But Zoroaster took the method of teaching intelligible to all and made it impressive by his own character and deeds.<sup>1</sup> He sought to win them by a noble appeal to all that was best in them. All this he did because he always bore in his mind that in this life he had to deal with real and not ideal human beings. He would even administer rebuke fearlessly where it was called for. He fearlessly declared what was due to the righteous and what was due to the wicked.<sup>2</sup>

His speech was always simple, natural and straightforward to the last degree. The majesty of his speech revealed

1 Ys. xxix, 10 and 11; xxxiii, 14;  
Ys. L, 6; Ys. xxxi, 2-4; etc.

2 Ys. xxix, 4 and 5; 10 and 11.  
xxx, 2 and 18; etc.

itself in the simplicity of his language. No magnificent imagery found a place on Zoroaster's lips. His was the language of a wise experienced man. Indeed, Zoroaster was the most successful preacher and teacher.

However, at the outset of his public ministry Zoroaster met with little success. We know from his sermons which are preserved in the Gathas, that he had many enemies. He was exposed to bitter enmity and danger.<sup>1</sup> He had to contend with such powerful oppressors and persecutors as the Bandvas, Kavis, Karapans, Usigs and others who entertained evil designs against him and his Religion.

Storms soon gathered about him and persecutions arose as the natural outcome of the conflict between his principles and those of his opponents.<sup>2</sup> Zoroaster had to submit to ridicule, insults, annoyances, torments and pains.<sup>3</sup> In the Gâthâs he appears as a forlorn man overtaken with horror and oppressed with sorrow.<sup>4</sup> Suffering and sadness weighed down his soul, though not his hopes to save men against themselves.<sup>5</sup>

Zoroaster committed his life and success into the hands of Ahura-Mazda.<sup>6</sup> He often turned to Him in prayer and prayed long and repeatedly in order to get from him help and strength to fulfil His Will.<sup>7</sup> His prayer and lamentations are fraught with a deep lesson for us. They teach that even the most afflicted soul has one last remaining comfort ; it always turns to God in truthful prayers and to Him confides its woes.

Did Zoroaster's enemies succeed in their evil designs against him ? They were all defeated and disappointed in the

1 S. R. E. Vol. xlvii. 65—67 and 122.

2 Ys. xlvii, 1—6, 11—17; xlviii, 3, 5, 7, xlix, 1—5.

3 Ys. xlvii, 1—2, Ys. xlviii, 3, 5, 7, xlix, 1—5.

4 xlvii, 1—2.

5 Ys. xlvii, 3 and 12—19, Ys. xlix, 8—10.

6 Ys. xlvii, 1—3 etc.

7 Ibid.

long run. Even from the Turanians who were his bitter opponents, some had been known to come over to his holy creed and help to prosper the settlements which their tribes had so often destroyed.<sup>1</sup> No doubt, Zoroaster was perfectly successful in the end.<sup>2</sup> He dealt with his stubborn opponents with endless patience and discretion and answered their questions with a profound wisdom which baffled them. "He defied them all and they retired routed and overcome by that weapon—the chanting of the sacred Avesta of Ahunuvar, embodying the sublime goodness pleasing to Ahura-Mazda. And he won the final victory in the cause of God. And he became worthy of the manifest good recompense and a wielder of the power pertaining to God's dominion. And he showed to the people the way to mar Angra-Mainyu and he kept in progress the work pertaining to the final triumph of God. He destroyed the material frames in which the evil spirits before his time used to move about openly.....Owing to the holy Zarthosht they became helpless, vanquished, despairing of misleading ( the people ) and incapable of assuming the visible shape."<sup>3</sup>

Zoroaster did not gain his triumphs by the force of arms and a whirlwind of terrors. But he conquered all by the force of his reasons and arguments and his piety and prayers and by the force of the truth of his teachings.<sup>4</sup> For this campaign he had secured the powerful co-operation of half a dozen men—King Vistâsp, Queen Hutaos, Medhyô mâh, Frashaostar, Jâmâsp, Hvôvi—illustrious for their birth, rank, position, knowledge and piety—and with their aid and assistance Zoroaster subdued his enemies and promulgated his doctrines and principles.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ys xlvi, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ys xlvi, 13—17, Ys Li, 15—21 ;  
Ys. Liii 1 and 2, also S B. E.  
Dk. Vol. xlvii, Ps. 65, 67—69.

<sup>3</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. ix Ps. 614—616.

<sup>4</sup> See Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ys, xlvi, 14—18 and Ys, Li, 16-21.

All the doctrines and principles which Zoroaster preached and taught, give testimony of the goodness of his mind from which they originated. Are we not of one mind in extolling the purity of his teachings? Certainly, we are. How then can we suspect the purity of the life and character of the author of such teachings? Zoroaster was supreme in goodness and in every other virtue. He never allowed sentiments to escape him except those savouring of the sternness of virtue: "Zarathushtra gives as his offerings to Ahura the preeminence of his good mind and the life of his own body and to Asha (the preeminence) of his words and deeds and his (preeminent) obedience and his (preeminent) power or authority."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, then, as he was supreme in good thought, word, and deed, he was supreme in charitableness. Not only did he offer to his Creator, Ahura-Mazda, all the best that he possessed but also offered to his fellow-men all his best possessions, his supreme spiritual knowledge, his supreme doctrines, principles and precepts with no other motive than that of promoting their weal and welfare. He offered them to the high and the low, to the rich and the poor, to the learned as well as to the unlearned and in such a simple language and in such a natural and unaffected manner that any one from amongst his hearers could take advantage and reap benefits of his teachings. So simple, sincere and frank and so liberal-minded was he that he preached all that he knew and practised and without using any sort of physical force or undue pressure on his hearers he bade them to ponder on his teachings, to discriminate, to decide and then to choose their religion.<sup>2</sup>

Thus we can easily see that Zoroaster had a warm, loving and compassionate heart for men and even for beasts

1 Ys. xxxiii, 14.

2 Ys. xxx, 2-5, xlv, 1-5; also S. B. E. Vol. xxxvii, 282 and 283.

in their needs.<sup>1</sup> In this respect he stands an exemplar to us. His goodness or love towards Ahura-Mazda as towards men and the lower animals was free from all thoughts of self-interest. No selfish motive ever swayed him in his intercourse with them. He never exploited his friends or foes for selfish ends.

From the records we learn that the tie between Zoroaster and his parents was exquisitely close and tender. He remained faithful to the ties of filial affection upto the last hour of his earthly life. He loved his parents, his wife his children, his kinsmen and his friends with a love inspired by the noblest motives. The Gâthâs as well as the later Scriptures show the most intimate and endearing connections between him and those whom he called his "kinsmen" and "friends." He aimed, in fact, at nothing but to promote spiritually and physically the welfare of men.

Until the coming of Zoroaster the excellence of the virtue of obedience to God had never been revealed. In him subjection to God was ideally complete. The spirit of obedience towards Ahura-Mazda and the acknowledgement of His sovereign power and of his own entire dependence upon Him, all found expression in Zoroaster's words and deeds.<sup>2</sup> The leading principle of his life, the key to his character and the key-note to all his utterances was in conformity to the Will of Ahura-Mazda. "Thy will be done,"<sup>3</sup> was no conventional phrase with Zoroaster, but the expression of a living and working principle. His conformity with Ahura's Will was no mere passive acceptance of trials when they came. He made it the business of his life to do with all his strength and at whatever cost to himself what he believed to be most acceptable to Ahura-Mazda. Because he

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<sup>1</sup> S. B. E. Vol. xlvii, 151 and 153.

<sup>3</sup> Ys. xxix, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ys. xxxiii, 14.



had perfect faith in His Law and in His Will. He firmly believed in His perfect goodness and perfect omnipotence.<sup>1</sup>

In the whole course of his life and prophetic career we discern the spirit of voluntary submission in all its intensity to Ahura's Law and Order. In Yasna XXXIII, 6, we see him offering obedience to Asha (the Law or Order). In Yasna XLV, 5, he declares the best Māthras which the most bountiful Ahura had told him and says: "They are for men the best to listen to. Those who will pay me obedient attention, will gain Weal and Immortality." It was in this spirit of voluntary obedience that Zoroaster fulfilled the task committed to his care by Ahura-Mazda. In fact, one of the most remarkable features of his life, as recorded in our Scriptures, is the fervor of his allegiance and subordination to Ahura-Mazda: "O Thou Righteousness! knowing the Good Mind when shall I see Thee and Obedience (Sraoshem), which makes the path leading to the most Bountiful Ahura-Mazda....."<sup>2</sup>

The nineteenth chapter of the Vendīdād tells us that Angramainyu attempted to seduce Zoroaster from the path of allegiance to Ahura, depicting before his eyes the splendors of this world. Curtly and with a holy indignation did Zoroaster rebuff the attempt on Angra's part and frustrated his opponent's evil design against him. Such was indeed the faith which Zoroaster manifested throughout his life. So full of faith, so full of gratitude was Zoroaster that he would always be ready and most eager to offer, even to sacrifice his own life, his own body and soul to do the Will of His Supreme Master, Ahura-Mazda. In this same allegory of the Vendīdād besides the spirit of allegiance to Ahura Zoroaster's moral courage, self-control, self-mastery are quite evident.

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1 Ys. xxix, 4, 5, 10, 11, Ys. xlix, 12.      2 S. B. E. Vol. xxxi, Ys. xxviii, 5,

As Zoroaster was most charitable and obedient, so he was most modest and humble. He affords a striking example in the virtue of humility. He referred in all matters to Ahura-Mazda. He ascribed everything good to Him. He declared himself in constant need of his abundant help and grace; because he had implicit faith in Him, in His Good Mind, in His Righteousness, in His Sovereign Power, in His Blessing and Grace: ".....When shall Asha ( Divine Righteousness ) Vohumanó ( Divine Good Mind ), Kshathra-Vairya ( Divine Sovereign power ) come to me hastening, O my Lord, Great Creator ! Do you therefore give us your abundant aid for our great enterprise. We are in great need of the grace of those like you."<sup>1</sup> " And therefore my soul and the soul of the Kine are praying with praises and making entreaties with our hands stretched out....."<sup>2</sup> Thus Zoroaster worshipped Ahura, his Creator, with self-debasing worship. He offered Him in gratitude his own life, mind, power and all the best possessions he had.<sup>3</sup>

Not only did Zoroaster declare himself entirely dependent on Ahura-Mazda but also dependent on his follow-men, on his intimate friends and followers:<sup>4</sup> " To what land shall I turn ? Neither my kinsmen nor my servants give me help ; neither the labouring class nor the class of the tyrants of our province come to my aid. How then shall I be able to satisfy and please Thee, O Ahura ! " I know this and I am thus unable to attain my wish.....Therefore I cry to Thee ; behold it, Ahura ! I desire help for me, as a friend bestows on his friend....." " When shall, O Ahura-Mazda ! the Saoshyants, the Benefactors and Enlighteners of the world, come to further the Righteous Order of the world.....Thee I choose, O Ahura-Mazda ! as my exhorter and teacher."<sup>5</sup>

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1 Ys. xxix, 11.

2 Ys. xxix, 5.

3 Ys. xxxiii, 14.

4 Ys. xli, 1-3; Ys. li, 15-20, Ys. liii  
1 and 2 etc.

5 Ys. xli, 1-3.

So perfectly free was Zoroaster from pride, envy and jealousy that he not only sought his friends' and disciples' help and cooperation but acknowledged and highly appreciated it and gratefully offered prayers to Ahura-Mazda so that he might bestow His gifts and blessings upon them : "Do you, O Ahura ! and Thou, O Asha grant unto these (my helping disciples) strength and power so that they may create or establish through good mind joy and happiness (in this world) of which, O Ahura-Mazda ! I considered Thee first possessor. "When shall Asha, Vohumanô and Khshathra-vairya hasten to me O Ahura-Mazda ! Do you now give us abundant help for our great enterprise. May we be (recipients) of the bountiful gifts of such an one like you."<sup>1</sup>

From the above quotations we also learn that Zoroaster was most just and grateful towards his righteous friends and followers. He always acted according to the laws of the world. He would do deeds most just towards the righteous, towards the wicked and towards those whose deeds of righteousness and wickedness combine.<sup>2</sup> So Zoroaster had never deprived his friends and disciples of the merit and credit which they could legitimately claim. He ascribed to their help his success in the great cause and regarded them as worthy partakers of most wished-for boons, namely, beatitude and glory.<sup>3</sup>

Besides Zoroaster was an ardent lover of truth. We are told in Yasna I, 6, Zarathushtrô.....hîjvô raithim stôî= Zoroaster was always the (director) of his tongue to the straight way. He was constantly searching after truth. In our Scriptures we find him constantly putting questions to Ahura-Mazda on various subjects and Ahura-Mazda revealing truths in answer to his questions. He received all those truths and exactly conveyed them to his people's minds. He, having

<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxix, 10 and 11.  
<sup>2</sup> Ys. xxxiih, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ys. xxix, 10 and 11; Ys. xxviii, 3  
 and Ys. li, 15; lui, 1 and 2.

been a great lover of truth, was the bitterest enemy of Angra-man, the Druj, the Demon of falsehood or deceit. The sole aim of his life was to vanquish this demon and all his offsprings.

During the whole period of his struggle with his enemies and in the midst of all difficulties, troubles, oppressions, persecutions and sufferings, Zoroaster never lost his temper through excitement and never lost his presence of mind and hope through discouragements and thus he never lost chances of success in his great enterprise. Under adverse surroundings Zoroaster's bearing bespoke philosophic patience. There were many who put it to the proof. There were the crowds from near and afar who thronged about him with a multiplicity of questions. These, of course, never wearied Zoroaster. But there were his enemies, the opponents of his teaching, the Bandavas, Kavis, Karapans, Usigs and others with their intrigues and scorn, always harassing him. But under difficulties and dangers he displayed remarkable courage and endurance and was ever ready to go all lengths of self-sacrifice.<sup>1</sup> He preserved the tranquillity of his mind (âkhshti), his optimistic spirit, and his presence of mind and with all these he readily found resources and means to obtain his own release and relief and the overthrow and defeat of his enemies.<sup>2</sup>

He always prayed and sought Ahura's help ; because he always hoped that His help was sure to come and intimately give him success. Indeed, he was the most optimistic of all men. His extraordinary optimistic nature we observe in all his doctrines and principles.

Besides his doctrines and principles testify to his best wisdom, prudence and discretion.<sup>3</sup> Zoroaster was model of wisdom and discretion. He was a possessor and giver of

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1 Ys. xlv, 1—18; S B. E. Dk. Vol. 3 Dd. Chap. iv, 6.  
 xlvii, 58—60 and 66—68.

2 Ibid.

wisdom (*dâtâ khratêush* Ys. I, 6). Alike in what he preached and revealed and in what he demanded he never outstepped the bounds of prudence ; because he always bore in his practical mind that in this life he had to deal with real and not with ideal human beings. He gave a practical proof of his wisdom in that he always chose the best possible disciples and the best possible means for accomplishing the end in view. He never took a faulty step nor did he needlessly expose himself to danger.

Thus, then, we have seen on the best authority of the Zend-Avesta, on the undoubtable authority of its best parts, namely, the *Gâthâs* and the *Dînkard* that Zoroaster was a unique Prophet of Iran endowed with a perfect intellect and a perfect will, with perfect intellectual and moral virtues. Such a rare combination of qualities, as we have seen above, went to the making up of Zoroaster's character. We see in the *Gâthâs* and in the later Scriptures that by such a noble and sublime character Zoroaster uplifted men around him ; awakened within them the consciousness of their dependence on Ahura-Mazda ; taught them that all greatness, power and dignity were to be found in their subjection to the Will or Law of Ahura-Mazda. He has shown men by his doctrine as well as example the true meaning of this present life and has turned them to the path of virtue.

What teacher, except Zoroaster, can one point to who did not in the course of his teaching stumble upon some destructive error or another ? Did not Socrates, the reputed master of Morality permit in his laws the promiscuous interchange of wives, an example afterwards followed by Cato, the glorious Roman and by Plato, the greatest philosopher of Greece ? Did not Lycurgus allow the Spartans every act of theft, however reproachable, provided they could manage it cunningly and clandestinely ? And did not Solon suffer the

Athenians to indulge in every act of lewdness, however scandalous, provided they were in the rank of free-men and not slaves? Aristotle felt no scruples in getting a law established for the Republic to the effect that, if in a family the number of sons went beyond the limit of its income, the mother of such family should in future procure abortion: that instead of tenderly nursing of the children that might chance to be born blind, infirm or crippled they should be exposed to the elements to perish. And Seneca, the great moralist, with fine rhetorical language commended suicide to men who lacked patience and fortitude to endure life under disgrace or affliction. And likewise Tacitus, Pliny and other persons of vaunted wisdom—how highly did they commend the persecution of enemies, the wreaking of vengeance for affronts, the pursuit of things which could never be one's own?

Zoroaster sets us an example of every virtue in order that we might follow his footprints. His life reveals him as exempt from all sin and error. This model of a perfectly virtuous life which Zoroaster led, has had a very far-reaching effect. From the example of the life of that one man sprang a multitude of human hearts testifying by their holy virtues to the vitalising power which dwelt in that one life. If we turn our gaze upon his immediate disciples and listen to their words contained especially in the Gâthâs, we discern that those virtues which we see in their teacher, Zoroaster, penetrated them all. Everyone who has studied the Avesta, especially the Gâthâs, has accepted without any serious gain-saying the fact of their spiritual supremacy and has admired their code of morals and revered their exalted character.

Who were the first disciples whom Zoroaster called to listen to and help him in his mission? They were Gustâsp (the King), Hutaosa (the Queen), Medhyo-mâh (Zoroaster's cousin), Farshaostra (Zoroaster's father-in-law and the minister of Gustâsp), Jâmâsp (the State Minister) and Zarir

(the brother of King Gûstâsp) and the rest.<sup>1</sup> These were no rustic, unlettered ignorant men but they were, so far as we know, men distinguished for their eminent birth, rank, position knowledge and piety. It was men of this type whom he took for his immediate disciples. They played the role of messengers for his mission and represented him amongst men. It was men of this type whose aid he solicited in laying the foundation of his great Religion.<sup>2</sup> Good and true as they were, their life of discipleship under Zoroaster made them worthier still to be the boon companions of the Prophet and to be partners in his mighty work.

During Zoroaster's life-time and long after that a very substantial progress continued to be made in the social and spiritual state of the Iranians. His disciples increased in number and their influence continuously and rapidly extended. The source of their inspiration was the same as that of their Prophet. That source was Ahura-Mazda. They believed like Zoroaster that they were in communication with the one living and true God, and that whilst they spoke, they were expressing the very thoughts and uttering the very words of Ahura-Mazda. Hence the authoritative prefix to all their announcements—"Thus said Ahura-Mazda—" was uttered in the solemn tone of the sincerest conviction. That they were profoundly earnest and sincere in their belief, cannot be doubted. Their enthusiasm was the result of an absolute conviction not only of the truth of their utterances but of their divine origin and authority. They could not believe otherwise; for they were constantly experiencing phenomena which forced that conviction upon them. That conviction was communicated to the people by their intense earnestness, piety and sincerity; and not by the exhibitions of what we call miracles and which

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<sup>1</sup> Ys II, 16—20 and S. B. E. Vol. xlvii, Dk. P. 124 and 125.      <sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Elijah and Jesus Christ and later Mohammad are supposed to have performed.

It is a law of God of emanating from His own profound goodness that one soul can give a sufficient amount of its good to another. In great souls this power of communication is highly developed and it was so in the case of Zoroaster and his disciples. They could express their thoughts so well and impressively that even men of low intelligence could comprehend them and be thoroughly impressed of their truth. The holy words of our holy disciples, of our Zoroastrian saints, instilled their spirit and life into devout and humble souls precisely in the same way that they themselves derived their inspiration from God.

Under the guidance of such disciples to whom Zoroaster had relegated authority, his doctrines spread rapidly, embracing in the first instance, Bactria, later on the whole of Iran and still later the whole of the Greek and Roman empires, Asia Minor, Arabia, India and China. In all these important parts of the world Zoroastrian doctrines were preached and promulgated and Zoroastrian societies had sprung up and flourished. The heritage which Zoroaster bequeathed to his disciples, was taken charge of by his later followers and by the Zoroastrian priesthood who travelled from one country to another with a view to convert the peoples of the world to their Zoroastrian Faith : " We sacrifice to the approaches of the Athravans, as they approach us from afar and seek to gain the provinces and spread the ritual lore,....." <sup>1</sup> " We sacrifice .....to the good Law of the worshippers of Mazda to whom the Athravans sent afar did sacrifice, wishing a good memory to preach the Law." <sup>2</sup> "The Creator Ahura-Mazda sent this Religion ( for ) its proclamation not only in the country of Iran but in the whole world, (and) among all races,

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1 S. B. E. Vol. xxxi, P. 291

2 S. B. E. Vol. xxiii, 268,



and has caused to be propagated in the entire world wherever (there were) impurities ; spiritually through its surpassing philosophy and truthful thoughts and truthful words and materially through truthful deeds. In each (of those tribes and countries) it became so current that even as to him who was the most sceptical person, this Religion with sublime essentials became current with all purities.....Persecution is, moreover, unnecessary (for it). And this religion has been ever progressing and the Evil Sprit will become languished on account of it, so that the religion will attain to complete currency and thereby, the world will attain to purity—.”<sup>1</sup> “And for the edification of the nations of the earth this message of revelation was taken from Persia over the seas to other pious men in a regular seafaring ship of the shape of a cow called ‘Sarasavak-Gai’. It was also carried by land to various places so that all mortal men inhabiting this entire earth may become perfectly acquainted with this religion.”<sup>2</sup>

“Shahpuhar, King of Kings, son of Ahurmazd warred with the kings of all countries and made them believers in Ahura-Mazda. And he created a taste (for religion) among all people by means of speeches. And he made them investigators of religion. And at last Adarbad by his adominitions made the people religious and secured their salvation from hell. And this supreme high priest placed before all the non-Zorastrians an explanation of all the different Nasks (Books) of the Avesta. Upon which some who accepted the faith, confessed to this effect—‘ We have seen with our own eyes every point of the faith and hence everyone is sure to abandon his evil religion, and we shall keep up our efforts for the faith.’ And they did accordingly.

“Again (Khosru) thus addressed all the mobeds who are evidently servants of God and of virtuous disposition—I

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1 D. D. Dk. Vol. x, P. 12.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 457.

order you with the best wish that you should create a taste for the Avesta and its exposition with new and new zeal. And by the acquisition of its knowledge (of the Avesta) the worthy people of the world should be made exalted in rank. They should fully instruct such as are capable of learning from among the people of the world, who do not understand the Creator nor the details regarding His miraculous spiritual creation. Such as are wanting in intelligence and are of perverse thoughts should be instructed in the faith in the way that seems best, to wit, by comparisons and examples.”<sup>1</sup>

“The celebrated erudite Senecas (the able philosophers of Rome) of Rûm, and the servants of India have shown an appreciation of and have much admired the fore-sighted persons of Iran. They adopted their<sup>2</sup> expressions and ideas, and on seeing the great worth of these wise men of Iran showed their preference for them.”<sup>2</sup>

Having dealt thus far with the primary authors and the primray sources of the Zend-Avesta, I shall now speak of the Zend-Avesta, itself. In the third chapter of my book, “Zarathushtra and Zarathushtrianism in the Avesta,” I have given a summary of each of the important books of the Zend-Avesta. Without repeating therefore what I have already said there, I wish to give in this place the most important characteristics of the contents of our sacred Volume and make some general remarks as by way of an introduction to the main subjects treated in the subsequent chapters.

We have our original Scriptures that we call the Avesta and we have the Zoroastrian Tradition which we call the Zend written mostly in the Pahlavi and the Pâzend languages. The Zend upholds the canon of the Avesta and affirms its genuineness.

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, Ps. 579 to 591.

2 Ibid P. 606.

There were priests and high-priests in Iran of those days whose life-time business was to continually study and preach the Zend-Avesta and maintain its genuine character. There were enemies thereof in the Avestan times as well as in the Pahlavi centuries but they never doubted its genuineness, albeit they despised the sacred volume and its contents. The early Greek, Roman, Jewish, Mohammadan and Christian writers who referred to the Book, were all convinced of its genuineness which is amply proved by external as well as internal evidences. The important Books of the Zend-Avesta have not till now undergone any alteration in their essential parts. Their integral ideas or truths retain their original character and consistency.

Our sacred Zend-Avesta stands on a foundation and authority far superior to that of the Shastras of the Hindoos, the Bible of the Christians, the Talmud of the Hebrews, the Confucian writings of the Chinese, the Sibylline books of the Romans and the Koran of the Mohammadans. In philosophy as in moral science it has been exalted and admired by impartial scholars and given a place above the works of Christ and Mohammad and of the Brahmins, Jains and Jews. Let Voltaire come in with his subtle philosophy or let Platonic philosophers and Pansi heretics of our day come with their attacks on our Zend-Avesta ; but there is no better proof of its indestructibility than the fact that it has withstood the ravages of times and none of them was so dreadful as the mighty and continuous armed hostility of the Mohammadans.

It seems as if our Zend-Avesta has been divinely protected, as if God has guarded it through all these many centuries. " And this ( Avestic ) Revelation and the Mathras had been preserved in the written language, were so ordered to be copied out in the original, that even now they are preserved, likewise, in a large number of manuscripts. And as it is

manifest.....(these) shall be learnt by heart, ( since ) the benefits are many.....; even the thorough understanding of natural phenomena is from it; and it is therefore befitting to devote oneself truthfully and zealously to such profound sayings and customs. so that the recitation of the ( religion ) decision and the oral delivery of the original are more (effective).....''<sup>1</sup>

The time-changes which have swept thousands of other books into the sepulchre of oblivion, have tended but to brighten the fame of the Zend-Avesta. There is hardly one book in a thousand that lives for a hundred years. Any publisher can tell us that. It is safe to surmise that there is not more than one book out of twenty thousand that lives for a couple of centuries. But here is our sacred Book, the Zend-Avesta, which has stood for generations, some part of which is twenty to thirty centuries old. One should know what struggles this Book has undergone in order to outlive these centuries. And yet it exists as with strength and full reliance in itself. It challenges the admiration of all the good, and the spite and the animosity of all the wicked. It stands today translated and published in nearly a dozen of languages, and is studied and discussed today by the learned of all the civilized nations and communities of the world. While a few out of our community affect to criticise it adversely, there is a phalanx of learned and erudite scholars, both Zoroastrian and non-Zoroastrian, who are ever so staunch and sincere admirers of it.<sup>2</sup> Such is the divinely protected Zend-Avesta which no hand of mortal ought ever to desecrate or efface from the world.

Reverting now to the authorship of the Zend-Avesta it must be borne in mind that that one is equally the author of

1 D. D. Dk. Vol. x, P. 11.

2 The opinions quoted in the collections of Mr. P. Motiwalla, M.A. and the late Mr. N. Bilimoria, the theosophist.

a work who composes it personally or through another whom he may have primarily equipped with his own original suggestions and ideas. It is in this sense that Zoroaster and his immediate disciples, whilst they were the direct authors of the Gâthâs, were the authors of our Scriptures. They it was who originally inspired its holy composers and so thoroughly influenced their mind, thought and character, that it is nothing unfair to them to say that the Prophet and his immediate disciples were original authors of the Zend-Avesta and the real composers thereof only the secondary authors.

Zoroaster and his immediate disciples never wrote anything but taught the people around them by the sermons which they preached and these latter are preserved in the Gâthâs, the oldest and the most sacred portions of the Zend-Avesta. The writer of the later Scriptures were all leading Zoroastrian saints and sages. Close persual and study of their writings compel us to recognise that the source of all they wrote and preached in subsequent ages, was the Prophet and his disciples. In fact, the Zend-Avesta carries us back to Zoroaster himself.

The art of writing was not known during the epoch of Zoroaster. It made its appearance in Iran in later times. After its introduction Zoroastrian writings gradually came into existence and spread in the widening circles of the followers of the Religion. First they were made in the Avestan language and when the Pahlavi language began to flourish, they were made in Pahlavi and still later in Pâzend. All these sacred writings make up our Holy Book, the Zend-Avesta. The composers of the Zend-Avesta like all great intellects who write for the masses, were extremely simple. Though forceful in language and argument they made very rare use of similes or rhetoric. They did not go in search of imagery wherewith to clothe their thoughts. The homely things which

they encountered in every day life, furnished them abundant matters for inculcating lessons of heavenly wisdom. Inspired by Nature's beauty which laid out before them in all its richness, they imbibed solemn and sublime thoughts which they in their turn set forth before the people in a clear, sober and practical way. Often they seem to be content with reproducing what had been already treated by earlier writers.

"The Avestic Revelation (is) as the most brilliant garb of the good spirits," says the author of the Dinkard, "among all the glorious people of the world, so much so that the evil earthly knowledge has passed away from all the attainments of human beings. And the Zend, which, in a manner, is oral, is more current amid the world.....And the Avesta itself is highly remarkable owing to the teaching thereof by Zarathushtra from Ahura-Mazda. And therein no falsehood, absurdity and demoniacal desire (subsist) but all truths are spoken of (therein) with superior principles of judgement and propitiations of the Deity....."<sup>1</sup> The Zend-Avesta presents a large collection of heterogeneous writings ranging over many centuries. It presents to us historical records, biographies, accounts of spiritual and social experiences, exhortations, warnings, predictions, dialogues, catalogues of the names of the holy saints and sages and the most solemn though plaintive poetry. But all these writings are varying in authorship, date, place and language, in dialect and in style. They are all extant, put up into different volumes.

But there exists one strong tie which binds together all the materials so various and so ill-assorted; and that tie is that trend of uniformity which runs through all their thought and feeling. Beneath the differences of material language, method and style which are prominent in the writings of the Zend-Avesta, we discern a clear unity of thought and purpose,

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1 D. D. Dk. Transl. Vol. x P. 10.

and the continuous action of one single mind. To such unity, the important Scriptural Books, both Avestan and Pahlavi, all bear ample witness.

This intrinsic unity in the writing was believed by our ancestors in all ages to have been faithfully maintained by their various authors. The Zend-Avesta was believed to contain a harmonious and integral collection of the sacred Truths and each part of the body was treated as being more or less directly in correspondence with the rest. This belief expressed itself in the large practice which had been prevalent at all times of quoting from one or the other book of the Zend-Avesta in support or illustration of the statements of any other writer. The existence of this spirit of harmony was recognised and kept up by each succeeding writer.

There exists of course some points of difference between the Avesta and the Zend; but they lie merely in the difference of style and treatment. The former contains revealed truths, dogmas, doctrines and precepts; whereas the latter contains our tradition by which we mean the transmission of those revealed truths or doctrines with commentaries. The Zend Book is a collection of traditions, arranged, recorded and handed down through many generations by different writers all of whom have not been definitely identified.

The Zoroastrian tradition teaches on the authority of the Avesta. All that wealth of important dogmas, doctrines and devotional practices which it contains, is traceable to the beginning of the Zoroastrian Religion. Developement there certainly has been but no conspicuous break with the past. Newly arising needs and the necessity for combating error by more clever definitions of truths brought into being a literature that enriched if anything, the doctrinal and devotional treasury of the Zoroastrian Church as founded by the Prophet but the process was throughout essentially the same, viz, one of maturing that which was already existent.

Of course, we cannot put the Zend on the same footing with the Avesta. However, we are bound to believe tradition as a necessary aid to the understanding of the original works. The Avesta and the Zend both should be considered as the outcome of the same one Faith. The Avesta alone cannot be our sole guiding book. It often requires exposition, and for ascertaining many vital points, and for solving many abstruse and important questions we need the help of the Zend, our tradition. Very often do we find in it many a problem quite clearly expressed and explained at length. To the tradition each generation of our Zoroastrian race has been deeply indebted because of the accumulated wealth of social and spiritual experiences which it gives to the Zoroastrians of each succeeding generation. "..... And it here be anyone for whose opinion I have perfect reverence, a priest acquainted with the religion, who understands and manages intelligently, by holding in reverence the ancient treaties and truth and the sayings of the high-priests, whatever of his is to (our) purpose, as regards the reply (to your questions)..... A clearer demonstration of the exposition of revelation.....as regards religious practice (is) from two sources: one is from the treatises which are an exposition of the rules and wisdom of the leader of the Religion and the other which is more descriptively expressed, is the writings of various glorified ancients, those who were the great leaders of those of the ancient faith.....As their writings on account of depth and minute wording, are not well understood through the diffusion of difficult words,.....if there be anything which is wanted by you more clear and more plain in meaning or a nearer way to a true interpretation,.....of any decision of a learned leader of the religion, I will give.....whenever you ask.....so far my knowledge.....permits".<sup>1</sup>

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1 S. B. E. Vol. xviii, Dd. Chap. I.



So according to the above-given passages of the Pahlavi book *Dâdistân-î Dînik* precious indeed to every wise man must ever be the inheritance of the past. The religion of the past can never be rightly understood except in the light of the tradition of that religion. One is often warned against the fallacy of reading modern ideas into the ideas of by-gone ages and the warning has its value. But it is equally fallacious to suppose that we can isolate the past and study it without assistance from the present. For in the world there are no such things as isolated facts. Now the facts of the past that have come down to us, are like fragments that have dropped out of their context and to understand them properly we must take to tradition as an inevitable guide. Can anyone say that no inference from a given proposition is legitimate which does not militate against the essential spirit thereof; that no one truth is capable of suggesting another; that the Zoroastrian ought to preserve in a jealous and sterile isolation each proposition of the Avesta? Can any one suppose that the several truths of the Zoroastrian creed are so many separate unsuggestive, unfruitful dogmas having no traceable relation towards each other? Can it be taken for granted that each revealed truth involves none other except what is seen plainly as lying on the surface of the terms which express it? In short, are the doctrines to be regarded now only as so many barren abstractions? If a man holds a doctrine with so light a grip that it illuminates nothing in harmony with its true and original spirit, and suggests nothing beyond itself, he is in a fair way to forfeit it.

A living faith needs must suggest inferences. The seed which has not shrivelled into husk, cannot but sprout when laid beneath the sod. The living belief once implanted in the soil of thought and feeling cannot but bear its flower and fruit in the moral and intellectual life of a thoughtful and earnest person. One may isolate a religious conviction by some crooked process of reasoning but the conviction which cannot grow in the heart and mind, is already condemned to death.

If theology is inferential, she must infer under guidance and within the limits of certain fundamental rules. All distorted and eccentric reasonings as also inferences which do not harmonise with the spirit of the religion and its integral doctrines, must be discarded as heretic stuff ; whereas the conclusions which the many minds of many ages have drawn with scrupulous care to preserve the spirit of the religion are entitled to respectful attention. If we needs must reject conclusions drawn professedly from the substance of revelation but really not from it, it does not follow that we should reject inferences which are explanatory and in unison with the spirit of the religion or which exhibit the bearing of one revealed truth upon another. Such inferences bring into relief the meaning of the details of the revelation. They elicit pregnant and momentous truths from original propositions which in the absence of sufficient guidance and reflection may lead us to assume that they possess only a secondary degree of significance.

The illumined mind of the writers of the Zend (the traditions) had for ages been engaged in studying the original materials of the Zoroastrian Revelations and had drawn a series of well conceived and systematised inferences. As time went on and Zoroastrianism came to assume a place of prominence in the great intellectual centres of the world, such as Babylon, Lydia, Greece, Rome and so forth, the Zoroastrian Theology, that is,.....the authorised explanation of the Zoroastrian principles and doctrines which had begun with the Pahlavi period,—began gradually to develop. In this process of gradual development Zoroastrian Theology, as was natural, underwent expansion. Some development or other must take place when the world itself advances. The thoughtful mind of saintly persons must ever meditate upon things which they believe in the heart of their hearts to be true and seek for the best methods and the best arguments to give articulate

expression to their knowledge inherited by them from their ancestors.

Such was precisely the case with the Zoroastrian saints. They desired to commend their religion to other people and meeting with intellectual opposition they had naturally to furnish new explanation in answer to every newly advanced arguments of their opponents. Questions were asked and they had to answer and explain them. Their undoubted purpose in so doing was to explain and guard what they believed to be the essence of Zoroastrianism. They never attempted, nor did they ever claim, to do more than give explicit expression to what Zoroaster and his successors had believed. Thus, then, Zoroastrian Tradition arose like all other traditions in the meditation of other brains and other minds upon the principles and practices of the Religion of Zoroaster and his nearest disciples; and having arisen it shed new light, illustrating, illuminating and intensifying, the spirit and significance of their own Faith, upon a world misled and misguided by all manner of wild and seductive systems of religion.

No doubt, the tradition as handled by the great Zoroastrian saints teaches on the authority of the Avesta, and retains its identity and essential character. However a few of the primitive truths taught by Zoroaster and his disciples were in later periods corrupted in their transmission from mouth to mouth through the different ages till upto our own times. The imagination of those through whom they passed, have here and there added details embodying their own notions of what ought to have been true and thus the truths might have occasionally become a grotesque caricature of the original in the hands of inexpert and unexperienced thinkers. The destructive force of time is no less observable in the sphere of human ideas as in that of material and social facts. Time exposes doctrines and speculations to the action of certain

causes, just exactly as there are causes always at work which threaten political systems with decay and dissolution. This is also true in the case of art whose works too are badly affected by time. Similarly, fundamental doctrines as of religion or philosophy suffer with the lapse of time, and this, by a dual process, viz. from within and from without.

From within they are exposed to the risk of disintegration by captious analysis; when once they are adopted by any large section of the public, they are naturally subjected to the scrutiny of many and variously constituted minds. The primary ideas upon which each doctrine is based, are all separately examined and commented upon. It thus often happens that certain elements of the doctrine essential to its perfect embodiment are rejected or it may be that all its constitutive elements are radically altered. It may be also that some subtle intellectual poison is injected into the doctrine and while men imagine that they are only adapting it to the temper of an age or to the requirements of a given line of thought, its intrinsic work is forfeited or its very life and heart taken away.

It cannot be denied that some of the original doctrines are handed down to us, intermingled and alloyed with non-Zoroastrian beliefs and superstitions. The adulterations are the artificial accumulations of centuries of uncontrolled intermeddling. In every age and community there are always some people existing who make or unmake, modify or tamper with the original truths of their religion according to their own wierd fancies and caprices. The Zoroastrian community had likewise no lack of such people.

The adulterations and superstitions that have crept into our religion are the results of two main causes; first, the want of proper religious institutions for the guidance of our community; such institutions as would point out with authentic evidence the real lines of truth and could condemn

and restrain with the weight of authority all foreign excrescences ; secondly, the close contact of centuries between the Zoroastrian race and aliens: the Mohammadans, Hindoos, Budhists, Christians and other non-Zoroastrian communities.

A doctrine that has escaped damage from within, is often exposed to mutilation from without. No essential doctrine or truth is ever spared opposition or challenge. It appears as though it provokes attacks by the mere fact of its existence ; by the amount of attention which it wins for itself as is coveted by some other rival doctrine. Besides, the craving for novelty is a great universal failing with man who in his frivolousness looks for novelty even in religious matters. So it must be borne in mind that our traditions cannot of themselves give a reliable solution to all questions pertaining to our Religion. Our traditional writers seem to have misunderstood and misinterpreted some important questions which are clear enough when studied in the Avesta, our original Scriptures.

When we turn to the contents of the Zend-Avesta, that is, the Zoroastrian Religion, we find a certain amount of development traceable. This does not for a moment imply that the main principles of the Religion are susceptible of modification. During the last thirty centuries every attempt to modify it in essential particulars has invariably evoked resistance and this resistance will be offered to the end. The task incumbent upon its followers is that of confirming its principles and doctrines and proclaiming them to successive generations. Definite progress, in this sense, is discernible in Zoroastrianism as it advanced with times.

It must be noted that our Religion as expounded in the very beginning lacked nothing in completeness ; but through the process above described it underwent elaboration and some times even modification. It is quite true that in the later

writings of the Zend-Avesta we some times come across not only with traces of a healthy development but also with subversion. It appears that some of the teachings of Zoroaster and his immediate disciples have been occasionally misunderstood and perverted in consequence by some of our later Zoroastrian writers. As for example, those attributes which are represented in the Gâthâs as divine or human attributes, are exhibited in the later Avesta as well as in our tradition as personified beings. Again in the later writings Spenta-mainyu and Angra-mainyu are exhibited not as opposite human attributes but as two supreme Beings opposing each other in design, plan, creation and government. A system of theology has thus been erected ostensibly on the foundation which Zoroaster laid but which bears little resemblance to the true theology as is embodied in the oldest portions of our Scriptures, the Gâthâs.

As I have mentioned above, the Zoroastrian Scriptures are composed into several books. These books are divided into two categories: temporal and spiritual. Those which treat of temporal affairs, belong to one class and those which deal with matters pertaining to the attributes, powers and destiny of the soul, to the other. It is only the latter that are supremely interesting and important since they deal with matters pertaining to the most important part of man, the soul.

The distinguished chemist, Welliston, was once asked where his laboratory was and the inquirers expected to be shown some large apartment filled with very expensive apparatus; but Welliston ordered his servant to bring a few glasses on a tray and he said to the inquirers: "This is all my laboratory. I make all my experiments with these." We know there are some who take a whole library to express their ideas of theology and morality; so many theories of their own have they on the subjects. But the theology and

moral science of us, Zoroastrions, are compassed in this one word ; " Gâthâs ". When we have once understood the height the depth, the breadth and the immensity of our sublime Hymns, the Gâthâs, we may say of us that we understand all that is comprised by theology and moral science. The Gâthâs constitute the oldest and the most important part of the Zend-Avesta. They are authentic ; their internal characteristics mark them out as having been composed by the immediate disciples of Zoroaster. They, moreover, embody the sermons of Zoroaster himself who never wrote but always preached. They are perfectly worthy of credence. They are entirely free from all subsequent modifications or interpolations. The Gâthâs contain chiefly the philosophy of the Zoroastrian Religion which constitutes the corner-stone of the whole superstructure of the Zend-Avesta. It is that which imparts vitality to the whole body of religious dogmas, doctrines and rites contained in our sacred Volume.

The Zoroastrian Religion such as is represented in the sacred Psalms, is indeed the broadest and the most catholic of all religious systems in its teachings and ethics. It is intended to be a universal Religion, leaguering humanity in one spiritual bond. " Hear ye all who come from near and from afar..... " Thus in his famous Gâthic sermon did Zoroaster invite men from all quarters of the globe. His was not a religion confined to cities and towns, or to caverns and deserts, nor limited to learned theologians or to profound scholars or to secluded hermits. No, even the poorest and simplest soul in the world if it only faithfully abided by the internal light of spenta-man, may securely get its salvation here and hereafter.

The only impulse in the right direction that the world has ever received, has come from our Gâthâs. They were the first to reveal to men fully and perfectly the natural as well as spiritual laws and phenomena. They have been

proved to be the mother of reform and refinement amongst the nations of the East and the West.

They reveal one great essential Truth round which the whole Zoroastrian Religion centres. All other truths conform to this one great Truth. This Truth briefly expressed is that Ahura-Mazda purposes in His boundless love to perfect the human soul ; to fill it with spenta-man, to develop and raise it to the stage at which it is capable of everlasting Weal and Welfare, in other words, that Ahura-Mazda purposes to communicate His own celestial Power, Virtue and Happiness.

It cannot be denied that the supreme good of an intelligent and moral being like man is the perfection of his nature. Nothing gives man what is worthy of being considered as happiness and everlasting benefit, unless it exalts him to that excellence for which he is designed by his Creator. The perusal and study of the Gâthâs would impress any casual student thereof that Zoroastrianism is the greatest Inspirer of Universal Virtue. Such virtue is a quickening principle ; it gives life and energy to man's intellect and his will, fortifies and animates conscience with the purpose of duty, raises thought to its highest objects and thus trains his whole being to that harmony and beauty the union of which constitutes Perfection. No book is known which, like the Gâthâs, so fully and perfectly fulfills the great office of calling forth, elevating and purifying the spirit of man ; of forming a good, upright, powerfull and unselfish character and thus conforming the soul to the Creator, Ahura-Mazda.

Spiritual humanity reached its highest developement and its highest possible altitude in the simple but grand and all comprehensive code embraced in the Gâthâs. In these we find the pure and simple code of ethics and religion, the real and essential Zoroastrianism which fell from the lips of Zoroaster and his immediate disciples.



In this earliest Zoroastrian literature we read that Zoroaster and his disciples, in their love of Ahura and of justice, obtained immense light on the interior ways of the soul and a vast experience in the best methods of subjecting the body to the soul and the soul to God, Ahura-Mazda. Their profound knowledge of the ways of God and the human soul, the wise maxims of their religion and the heroic examples of their lives, preserved with such care in the Gâthie Hymns, have been a great spiritual light to all subsequent ages and have been the models of religious discipline to all subsequent times.

How can men be more profitably employed than that they tried to acquire a better understanding of human as well as divine character? Such understanding is what we get in the Gâthâs. Love to God as well as love to man depends very much on our conception of the divine and the human characters. In the Gâthâs on no other topic have our holy saints so largely and so earnestly dwelt than on the characters of God and man.

The ideas about God, and about the soul and its destiny constitute the essence of the Gâthâs. These ideas present the fundamental nature of Zoroastrianism, and are intrinsically and intimately united with it. Take away from Zoroastrianism its fundamental nature and you have no more left of Zoroastrianism as such.

It has been often remarked by attentive intelligent readers of the Gâthâs that they possess a sort of personal magnetism, permanent attraction for the students and scholars of theology, psychology and ethics. And the magnetism or attraction has not diminished in intensity with the lapse of centuries. It is worthy to inquire: What is the secret of this magnetism of our sublime Hymns, the Gâthâs? Why is it that they have so permanently stood high in the estimation and appreciation of men of great learning and knowledge? Why do

such men, while reading them, experience a thrill of reverential pleasure and satisfaction? Why are their minds so deeply and permanently impressed, though they are not couched in a very attractive and elegant language? It is simply because they contain eternal vital truths. They contain truths of the first and utmost importance. They deal with the most important facts of nature and experience, with the true fundamental principles of science, philosophy and religion. They contain vital truths pertaining to God and man's soul. Because of such supreme truths the Gáthâs will never be forgotten by the intellectual world for all times to come. They are enshrined and have lived and will be enshrined and live in the hearts of their readers for ever. Truth possesses an inherent vitality which no amount of error can totally extinguish. Truth ultimately prevails in spite of all sorts of passion and prejudice. The love of truth is inherent in the normal human soul and its recognition is instinctive. It is this instinctive perception or recognition of truth that gives rise to that emotional thrill of pleasure and satisfaction which one experiences when he encounters statements of vital truths contained in our Gáthâs. Such supreme truth, such conformity with reason, is exhibited in every part of the Zoroastrian Psalms that nothing in them appears said for mere display of wit but all for the benefit and edification of man. And all this is said in a way that even the ignorant may come to know readily all they need to, the wise may pick up wisdom and every class of men may find in them the instruction best suited to their intelligence.

In numerous passages of the Gáthâs there is enough material to supply the spiritual needs of men, to raise diverse high emotions and aspirations, to console and comfort broken hearts and to inspire men with high hopes. In a word, the Gáthâs contain vital truths and incontrovertible facts derived from the vast and deep spiritual knowledge and experience of Zoroaster and his immediate disciples and successors.

Besides the Gâthâs other books of the Zend-Avesta contain physical and psychical truths and facts. They furnish us with the most valuable information concerning the Zoroastrian beliefs of nearly thirty centuries after Zoroaster and concerning even those of the times before Zoroaster. They furnish us with the dogmas, doctrines, principles and precepts, rites and ceremonies of the Zoroastrian Religion and with its history.

The Zend-Avesta does not represent Zoroastrianism as something absolutely new, dropped suddenly on the earth from heaven. But it declares that Zoroastrianism was the result of the development and culmination of all that primitive Saoshyants (Benefactors or Reformers) had taught and practised. "Before the advent of the holy Zarthosht of the devout Spitaman in what way had the preceding prophets been invited into this Religion? In this way:—The messages brought by the angels who revealed this pure good religion from time to time, had induced them to adopt the religion everywhere. An account of the thoughtful followers of religion who had adopted this religion is.....The first man to have faith in this religion was Gayômarâd; and after him Mashya, Smakâ, Hôshang, Takhmorasp, Jamshed, Faredûn, Minoshchehr,..... and the Kyanian Kings. Besides them there were many other leading men who used to propagate the religion by expounding it to the people and by the help of the same used to ward off the calamities overhanging the people, and to rule the world in prosperity."<sup>1</sup> In the beginning of the 6th book of the Dînkard it is said: "May there be propitiation of the Creator, Ahuramazd, through faith in the Revelation established by the Laws pertaining to the Zoroastrian worshippers of Mazda as well as to the primitive believers in that creed."<sup>2</sup> Thus Zoroastrianism

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1 D. P. Dk Vol. ix, P. 612, also D. D. Dk. Vol. xiii, bk vii, Ps 1-12,  
S. B. E. Vol. xlvii, Ps, 1-16.

2 D. D. Dk Vol. x, bk vi, P. 1.

was linked with Mazdayasnianism, the purest faith the world had known before Zoroaster. It was proclaimed as the sequel toward which that primitive monotheistic Religion had pointed. It gathered up all that was good in the primitive spiritual lore and offered itself as the ideal of religion on earth. "We worship the former religions of the world devoted to Righteousness which were instituted at the creation, the holy religions of the Creator, Ahura-Mazda, the resplendent and glorious."<sup>1</sup>

The Saoshyants and their mental and moral faculties are often invoked. In Yasna as well as in Yashts and in the Pahlavi Dinkard they are often spoken of as the befriended of Ahura-Mazda, the most useful to Him to smite and drive Angra-mainyu and its followers from the world. The Zend-Avesta speaks of the past as well as of the future Saoshyants. The fravashis of the Saoshyants born in the past as well as of those to be born in future are considered most powerful and are invoked and highly honoured: "The most powerful amongst the Fravashis of the faithful," says Yasht XIII, 17, "are those of the men of the primitive law or those of the Saoshyants not yet born, who are to restore the world."<sup>2</sup> "When come, O Ahura-Mazda ! they who are the Saoshyants to hold the Righteous Order of the world.....When shall the wonderful teachings of the Saoshyants with lofty wisdom come ?..... "When shall, O Mazda ! the men of mental perfection come ! And when shall they drive from hence.....the tyrants of the provinces who hold on their evil rule." "Such shall be the Saoshyants of the provinces and they shall go hand in hand with satisfaction and joy through their good mind, righteousness and by doing deeds of Thy commandment, O Ahura ! For they are appointed as bitter foes (of our opponents) able to effect or fulfil their desire (to destroy the evil doers or the tyrants)."<sup>3</sup> Thus, we can easily see from the above-given

<sup>1</sup> Ys. xvi, 3

<sup>2</sup> S. B. E. Vol. xxxiii, P. 184.

<sup>3</sup> Ys. xlvii, 3 ; Ys. xlviii, 10 and 12.

passages that Zoroastrianism is a progressive Religion developed and perfected by the Saoshyants who are the improvers and benefactors of the world through their teaching and practising wisdom and who by the assistance of their experience and complete mindfulness promote the progress of righteousness on this earth and produce distress for the fiend, Angramainyu.<sup>1</sup>

The physiognomy of a man is often indicative of the nature of his soul. Every religion has likewise a soul which is reflected in the body of its doctrines and its history ; and consequently every religion, so to say, has its physiognomy. Judged by its own Zoroastrianism bears a divine air. Zoroaster's Religion is invested with the authority of a divine Revelation. Zoroastrianism is expressly recorded by our sacred authors as the supernatural Religion through which Ahura-Mazda, conversing with Zoroaster, his disciples and his successors, made His Divine Will known to the world.

Ahura-Mazda imparts knowledge to man through them and shows him what he ought to be in His sight and in this world. Divine as is this knowledge in its origin, it is human in the sense that it teaches man practical truths for the betterment of his soul here and hereafter. The Zend-Avesta throws light on every momentous question of human existence. It illuminates the human soul as to the highest truths concerning its condition and teaches the means for attaining its last end as we shall see in the following chapters.

The Zend-Avesta fulfils a twofold office in regard to man. In the first place it uplifts and ennobles his natural and spiritual faculties ; it moulds human character and influences man to right living ; in the second, it furnishes him with the means of promoting all true order in domestic as well as social

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1 S. B. E., Vol. xxxvii, Dk. P. 277.

life. Thus, then, the Religion of the Zend-Avesta is not a system of doctrines merely to be received intellectually. Its truths are meant to be translated into character.

The ethical doctrines of Zoroastrianism may be summed up in these words: Charity for the poor and the needy and good will to all—*mazdâi khshathremchâ ahurâi âyim dhregubyô dadat vâstârem. Ushtâ ahmâi yahmâi ushtâ kahmâichft vase-khshyâs mazdâo dâyat ahurô*.<sup>1</sup> Zoroastrianism was the first to bring to light and make clearly manifest the principles of charity, obedience, humility, truth, faith and peace and to impress that there is no happiness without faith and sanctity. Zoroastrianism was the first to teach these principles and the world has since adopted them as the corner-stone of its civilization.

The Zoroastrian Religion contains the seeds of most of the branches of science known to us in our days.<sup>2</sup> The truths of the statements we meet with in our Zend-Avesta pertaining to history and to the science of physiology, hygiene, medicine, zoology, botany, geography, chemistry, astronomy, pertaining to the earth, the constellations, the planets, the stars, the moon, the sun and their shape and their movements, have been confirmed and supported by the researches and investigations of modern times.<sup>3</sup>

Nor does the modern doctrine of Evolution give rise to a conflict between science and Zoroastrianism. The different statements made in our sacred Volume are not totally opposed to the doctrine of Evolution. They convey to our minds the

1 Ys xlin, 1

2 S. B. E. Dd. Chap. ix, 3

3 The Gâthâs, Ys. xlv, 3-7; Vend 1, iii, v-x, xiii, xix 4, and xxi; Yts. Khorshed, Mâh and Tîr, 32-39; Dd. S. B. E. Vol. xviii, Ps 212, 213, & 259-267; D. P. Dk. Vol. I. Ps 3 & 48; Vol. II, P. 116, Vol. v. P. 290; Vol. v, P. 409; Vol. ix, Ps. 565-567, 645-647; Sikand Gûmânîk Vigâr Chap. v,

true ideas about the creation and the government of all the phenomena of the Universe. They indicate that the world and all it contains, are progressive and that the hand of God, Ahura, is in every step of that progress. We notice through the statements of our Scriptures that the incessant steps in the incessant and advancing progress of the material as well as of the spiritual world come into existence through and with the aid of incessant divine intercession: "Thanks be to the exalted Lord of the world, who of His own power and wisdom, has created six Amshâspends of high rank, numerous Ijads, the shining Paradise, Garothmân, the surrounding heavens, the sun, the shining moon, the numerous stars, the wind, the atmosphere, the fire, the water, the earth, the trees, the cattle, the metals, and mankind....." <sup>1</sup> The various species of beings, animate and inanimate, owe their origin, their variety, their diversity to the creative acts of Ahura-Mazda. <sup>2</sup> Zoroastrianism, therefore, has nothing to fear from the doctrine of Evolution, so far as the latter is not based on the false notion that the coming into existence of the species, the creation and government of the organic as well as the inorganic world, are caused by the operation of a primordial and immutable law in the organic matter.

Indeed, no intelligent true Zoroastrian could ever fight on the strength of his Religion the Copernican system or the Newtonian theorem. No intelligent Zoroastrian would ever consent to part with his knowledge of the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars and other natural phenomena as represented in his Zoroastrian Scriptures. No intelligent and staunch Zoroastrian could ever relinquish the lofty Zoroastrian conceptions of the nature and attributes of the Deity as they appear in the Zend-Avesta. Because all these conceptions of God and the Universe were first evolved out of the minds of no

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. II, Ps. 103 and 104.

2 Ys. xlv, 2-7, Ys. xxxvi, xxxvii, xxxix-xli; etc.

other than those highly inspired holy Zoroastrian saints as a result of their contemplation of the infinite wisdom and power displayed in the Universe. Much less could he be induced to return to pantheism or to idolatry or to the former crude and anthropomorphic conception of God as a being of limited intelligent power and goodness. In a word, every intelligent student of Zoroastrianism, properly acquainted with the sum and substance of the Scriptures, has always admitted that every step in the progress of science, instead of destroying Zoroastrianism or weakening its vital force, serves but to confirm its essential doctrines and to stimulate to their highest expression those emotions of awe, reverence and worship which the Religion founded by Zoroaster has always evoked.

The fact that Zoroastrianism has survived through the hoary past to our own times, that it exerted its wholesome influence from time to time on the religious systems such as Hebraism, Christianity and Mohammadanism, is an evidence that it is based upon true science. Had it not been founded upon truths and the facts of Nature, it never could have survived the proselytizing and destructive methods of the Mohammadan rule of Persia and could have remained in existence amidst so many adverse conditions and circumstances through which it had to pass after its followers came and lived in India.

In the doctrines of Zoroastrianism we discover none of the absurdities which we find in the ancient Roman and Greek literatures and about which we have spoken above. There is nothing that we find in it as mischievous, frivolous, absurd, fanciful, facetious; there is nothing that was calculated to stimulate, flatter and glut man's evil passions.

The Zoroastrian Religion allows no darkness to shroud the mind of man. It is light itself, brilliant and illuminating and shedding knowledge. Hence we find in the Zend-Avesta



no cases of men surrounded by bands of angels after a period of fasting ; or of virgins uttering divine oracles. Such miraculous feats as are ascribed to Aaron, Moses, Christ and the Yoges of India and paralled by those of ancient and modern magicians and sourcerers, are severely condemned. The pretension to knowledge and practice of the so-called occult arts is sinful. All such pretensions are deceit or falsehood and are liable to severe punishment according to the Zoroastrian Religion.

In the Zend-Avesta there is no mysticism or suffism. The Mystic and the Suffi flourished under the Mohammadan rule over the Persian Empire. And yet there are some our coreligionists who try to ferret out mysticism and suffism from our Scriptural passages that are anything but mystical and suffistic and to draw symbolism out of sentences that are far from being symbolical. In fact, in every commandment and prohibition which the Zoroastrian Religion inculcates, we find a strong and valid sense of reasonableness.

Let infidel Parsis say what they like with a view to belittle the Zend-Avesta ; let them say: " you have no right to give the Zend-Avesta such prominence or such praise ; because there are other books that have in them as much great beauty and value. " We grant that there are some grand things in other books. The Bible and Confucius taught kindness to enemies ; the Shastras have great affluence of imagery ; the Vedas have some ennobling sentiments. But go as we may through other great literatures of the world, the sum and substance of all the collected wisdom embodied in them we find in this our sacred Book, the Zend-Avesta of immortal and imperishable fame.

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## CHAPTER III.

### ZOROASTRIAN THEOLOGY.

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**I**n this chapter we deal with the following questions: Is there a satisfactory basis for the main fact in religion that there is a Personal God? How is this fact supported by the Zend-Avesta? What is there to lead us to believe the statements about God made in our sacred Volume?

We admit at once the utter impossibility of applying the same tests to settle these questions as may be applied in scientific problems. However we have convincing proofs in our religion to establish the existence of God. These proofs together with the statements of the Zend-Avesta concerning God will form the subject-matter of the present chapter.<sup>1</sup>

The principle in human nature from which religion springs, is the desire to establish relations with a being more perfect than itself. A religion is true in proportion to the clearness with which it makes manifest the Perfection of God. A particular religious system is to be measured by the conception which it inspires of God. Does it raise our thoughts to a Perfect Being? Does it exalt us far above our own nature? Does it introduce us to a grand and religious Intelligence? Does it expand our mind with venerable and generous conceptions of the Author of existence? We know no other test of a true and pure religion than this.

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<sup>1</sup> As I have thoroughly discussed these questions from every point of view in the 4th chapter of my volume *"Zarathushtra and Zarathushtrianism in the Avesta"* and in the 1st. Chapter of my book: *"A True Zarathosti Guide"*, and as I have carefully

given there all important authorities and quotations from our Scriptures, I think it advisable to present here only a general view for the ordinary reader and quote from the Zend-Avesta only where it is indispensably necessary

A religion has no excellence which does not lift us up into communion with a Nature higher and holier than our own. It is the office of religion to offer the soul an object of veneration and worship for its noblest faculties and affections, a Being through whom it may more surely and vigorously be carried forward to a state of perfection. In proportion, then, as a religion detracts from the sublimity and grandeur of the character of God, it is devoid of dignity, and tends to depress the mind. In so far as the conception of the Deity and His attributes are exalted, by just so much the religious emotions of reverence and worship become justified and enhanced.

Before the advent of Zoroaster and the spread of his religion into the world the air was full of wild systems such as Fetichism, Totemism, Henotheism, Animism and Polytheism. Impure idolatries were dominant every where. The Aryan and non-Aryan sages of the pre-Zoroastrian as well as those of the post-Zoroastrian epochs had given to the world and had spread amongst its peoples crude anthropomorphic conception of God.

The Greek philosophers, even Plato and Aristotle did not and could not reach the complete conception of a Personal God in the sense in which we understand it to-day. Plato, as is well known, regards the world as an embodiment of eternal archtypal ideas. He speaks at first of these ideas as immutable stationary types. But later on he conceives these ideas to have energy and movement and relationship, one with another. Further he groups these ideas under one supreme central idea of Good or Goodness itself. Aristotle exhibits far less religious feeling than Plato. He criticises Plato for separating his ideas so completely from the material world and himself regards the ideas or rational principles of things as immanent in Nature like the order of an army while only the highest idea is wholly immaterial and exists apart like the general of an army. This highest idea is

God who is pure reason and whose eternal and continuous activity consists in contemplative thought: in other words, the divine life consists in self-contemplation. In so far the theology of Plato and of Aristotle was defective.

We find no true conception of the idea of a living God in the God of Moses. The Jews in common with all other nations and peoples were imbued with the idea of a plurality of gods. The gods were represented by material objects of worship. God in the Old Testament is represented as being egotistical, vain, selfish and jealous to the last degree. He is represented as being so deeply moved by anger and jealousy when he learned that the children of Israel were worshipping other gods that he wished to wipe them all out of existence. The contrast between the God of Moses and the God whom Zoroaster proclaimed to mankind, is too violent to permit even the most ardent Christian to mix up their identity.

The Bible declares God to be the Word who in the beginning was God and with God. In this idea there is the internal contradiction that the Word by whom all things are made and who sustains all things, can become His own creature. He who becomes incarnate, creates the form in which he manifests Himself simultaneously with the act of His selfmanifestation.

The Christians believe in the existence of a plurality of persons within One Essence of God, in the presence of several persons who not merely act together but who constitute a Single Agent. Catholics maintain that Christ was truly the son and truly God. They worship Christ with divine honours. They would never consent to separate Christ in idea or in reality from God, the Father. But no critic can fail to observe, as he reads the Zend Avesta, that the mind of primitive Iran was governed by one dominant conviction the like of which was unknown to every other ancient people. God was the

first thought in the mind of the Mazdayasnian as well as of the Zoroastrian of ancient Iran. The monotheistic idea was inherent in the race to which Prophet Zoroaster belonged. Zoroaster refined, elevated and perfected the popular conception of the Deity and fixed it in the minds of his disciples and his people.

Zoroastrianism has given to the world a conception of God His attributes and His relations to man that has served to intensify that instinctive emotion which should be the basic attribute of a true religion. It is admitted on all sides that the promulgation and protection of a belief in the perfect unity of God is the central and dominant object of the Zoroastrian Religion. Zoroastrianism is a system the original object of which was to impress upon mankind belief in the Divine Unity.

The Religion of Zoroaster is superior to all other religions of the world in its intense sense of Righteousness (Asha) and its conviction of a Righteous Personal God. From beginning to end Ahura-Mazda is essentially Personal. Zoroaster with his truest and deepest ethical insight, with his supreme hold on morality gave to the world the purest and the highest conception of Divine Personality, and this was really the most important contribution to Theology which it had not upto then attained. I wish to point out and emphasise the fact that Zoroaster announced a doctrine about God which, while it retained all the essential attributes of personality, retained nothing that was unworthily anthropomorphic. It does not transcend intelligence but is distinctly the most intelligible mode of conceiving a Personal God.

One of the greatest services that the Zoroastrian Religion has rendered to religion and to humanity, is its express repudiation of the crude anthropomorphic conception of God. Ahura-Mazda is the Supreme Being of the Zend-Avesta. He is the Highest Spirit in reality and in entirety. In numerous

places He is called Mainyuð-Spenishta or Spentôtēmô = Most Bountiful Spirit and Spenta-Mainyu = Bountiful Spirit. "In the name of Ahura-Mazda, the Lord, the greatest and wise, the all-ruling, all-knowing and almighty, who is a spirit among spirits and from His self-existence, single in unity was the creation of the faithful. He also created by His own unrivalled power the seven supreme archangels, all the angels of the worldly and spiritual existences and the seven worldly characteristics which are man, animals, fire, metal, earth, water and plants."<sup>1</sup> "I praise the name of that Mfnôyan Mfnô (the Spirit of Spirits) worthy to be praised, who always was, always is and always will be; whose one name is Ahura-Mazda, the God who is the greatest among all, the Creator Supporter, Protector, Endurer, the Lord of Righteousness, Forgiver, and Dispenser of excellent and pure justice. Thanks be to the exalted Lord of the world who of his own power and wisdom has created six Amshaspendis of high rank, numerous Ijads, the shining Paradise, Garôthmân, the surrounding heavens, the hot sun, the shining moon, the numerous stars, the wind, the atmosphere, the fire, the water, the earth, the trees, the cattle, the metals, and mankind.....I bow in the presence of the Omniscient and care-taking Lord who has sent through Zarthosht of the adorable Farohar,.....the wisdom of the Religion, worthy of faith through natural intelligence and (acquired) science (or knowledge),.....wisdom that is the best for the guidance of all persons who are, were and will be"<sup>2</sup> ".....The all good, most spiritual of spirits and most ruling of rulers is the Creator ( Ahura Mazda )....."<sup>3</sup> "Ahura-Mazda is all goodness without vileness and His Will is a Will altogether excellent "<sup>4</sup> "The Lord of Goodness is the bestower of superior rewards on those masters of the world who remain in obedience to His commands and who keep all men like unto

1 S. B. E. Sikand-Gûmânî Vigâr  
Chap. i, 1

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. II, P 103 and 104.

3 Dd. Chap. xxxix, 2 and 3.

4 Sl. Zâdaspâram Chap. i, 17.

Him''<sup>1</sup> "Again that Evil One (Angra-man) is not, as the creation of Vohŕman is, the second creation of God. From this it appears that the great self-existing God who is a law unto Him is one and alone. "The Life-giving One (God) is not the sustainer of the adverse creation''<sup>2</sup>. Thus Ahura-Mazda is all-good Spirit.

No doubt, the Zend-Avesta speaks of the tongue and of the mouth, of the hand, the eye, the body, the anger of Ahura-Mazda<sup>3</sup> but this is simply because man has perforce to speak of what is superhuman in terms applicable to humanity. Limited as man is by the condition of his nature, he can find no mode of expression except such as is based upon sensible experience ; and although he can convince himself by rational inference of the existence and of the character of what is beyond sense, he can frame no description of it nor even an image by means of imagination, except in so far as he is able to draw upon the phenomena of the external world. Concerning the First Cause, to comprehend and put this into words man has necessarily to use the only materials within his reach and borrow his phraseology from that which within his experience is the highest and noblest element found in the Universe—namely, his own mind and will. Thus even anthropomorphism is sound sense, but in so far only as it attributes all possible excellence to the source of all. It becomes foolish and unrational only when it attributes to the Supreme Being the limitations of an inferior order of being.

Ahura says to His worshippers: "ahmi yat ahmi Mazdâo nâma = I am that I am, Mazda by name = My name is Self-existent Omniscient ( Mazda ) Being."<sup>4</sup> Ahura claims here preexistence and omniscience. He unveils a consciousness of His being an Eternal Being. He speaks as One on

1 D. P. Dk. Vol iv, P. 255.

2 D. D. Dk. Vol. ix, Ps 573 and 575,

3 Ys. i, 1, xxxi, 3 and 13; xxxii, 11, xivii, 2.

4 Geldnor's "Avesta Texts" Hormazd Yt,

whom time has no effect. He is an unbeginning and unending and all-knowing Being. This is the plain sense of the language of the quotation.

“God is the originator of Divine wisdom in Creation”<sup>1</sup>  
 “.....I am acquainted with the deeds which demons and men perform in the corporeal world.....And I can see by my wisdom and discretion that which has been, that which is and that which ever shall be<sup>2</sup>.” “The Father and the Procreator or Origin of all the good is the Omniscient, Omnipotent and the All-ruling Creator, Ahura Mazda.....”<sup>3</sup> “He who is well versed in His self-learning and that is the manifest Creator Ahura-Mazda whose knowledge is for unlimited time.....”<sup>4</sup>  
 From these quotations we learn that Ahura-Mazda is Intelligent (Mazda). Now if intelligence is granted, it presupposes a living, thinking percipient entity, a mental organism. And an organised intelligence must be a personality. Therefore, as Ahura-Mazda is the Intelligent Being, He must be a Personal Being.

Again Ahura-Mazda's Personality is shown in and through the material Universe He has made. In Yasht I, I, we are told : “peresat Zorathushtraô ahurem mazdām ahura-mazda mainyuô-spenishta dâtarê gaêthanām astāvaitinām ashâhum=Zarathushtra asked Ahura-Mazda, ‘O Ahura-Mazda the Most Bountiful Spirit, the Holy Creator of the material worlds’ !” “..... ..He is the Ommiscient Being manifest through His works that are achieved by the best of means as well as by reason of His Ommiscience regarding both the worlds. He is the Lord of means and the Lord of works”<sup>5</sup>  
 The manifestations of the existence of God is from the several unifications of the material world”<sup>6</sup> Thus, then, the Creator of the Universe is Ahura-Mazda. And the Universe exhibits

1 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 442.

2 D. D. Dk. Vol. xvii, P. 64.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 288.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 402

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 412

6 D. D. Dk. Vol. x, P. 5.



a unity which would be impossible without a guiding intelligence at the back of it. From this the Universe seems to be moved by some wisdom or intelligence greater than itself as if some plans were being realised

Again the Personality of Ahura-Mazda is shown by man's having a sense of right and wrong which implies a moral Governor of the Universe: "This I ask Thee, O Ahura-Mazda! tell me rightly: who is righteous in regard to the matter about which I put Thee my question and who is wicked? Who is evil? Who is himself the wicked man? And evil man who goes against me and Thy blessings, why is he not considered as belonging to Angra-mainyu? "Thee I ask, O Ahura! tell me rightly. If Thou through Thy Righteousness rulest over all as their Protector, when the two armies shall meet (and fight) with hatred against each other, .....O Mazda! to which of the two wilt Thou give the victory".<sup>1</sup> These Gâthic passages and many others draw our attention to the afore-said arguments by which man can raise himself to the knowledge and recognition of the Personality of Ahura-Mazda. In the light of Zoroastrianism the entire Universe with its inhabitants exhibits itself as a wide open book, comprising lessons of divine lore, written by the finger of God. It is not enough merely to passively observe the outward appearance of this book. He who would read it aright, must become alive to the inward significance underlying all phenomena. Like the schoolmaster who illustrates his figures and diagrams so that the scholar may learn them not only through the ear but also through the eye, so does Ahura-Mazda give us the truths of His Daênâ (Religion or Law) and illustrate them in the natural world. Champolion, the famous Frenchman, went down into Egypt to study the hieroglyphics on monuments and temples. He deciphered them after much labour

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1 Ys. xlv, 12 and 15.

and announced to the learned world the result of his investigations. The wisdom, goodness and power of Ahura are written in hieroglyphics all over the earth and all over the heaven ; may God grant that we may have understanding enough to decipher them.

In our Scriptures we light upon such passages as the following which need to be studied in the very presence of the natural world :—"I inquire of Thee thus, O Ahura ! tell me rightly, who in the created Universe was the first author of the Holy Order (Asha) ! Who prescribed to the sun and stars their fixed course ? Who makes the moon wax and wane except Thyself ? " Who is the supporter of our earth and sky ? Who created the waters and plants ? Who gave swift-ness to the winds and the clouds ? Who is the Creator, O Mazda ! of the good mind ( within us ) ? " Who is the clever maker of light and darkness ? Who is the great artisan of sleep and wakefulness ? Who causes the dawn, noon and night ? "Who produced in the father love for the son ?....."<sup>1</sup> Who can answer these questions of the Gathic saint without speaking to us of God ? These questions in fact declare the greatness and glory of Ahura-Mazda. The saint draws here our attention to the fact that if even an ordinary man devoid of the advantages of education or schooling, were to observe day after day the phenomena of the world, if he were to see the sun and the moon rising in the east and setting in the west, the sky with its stars, the earth with its mountains, the seas, the plants, the fire, the air, the affection of the son for his father and so forth, he would be led without the aid of a single argument to believe that there is a God whose works are not like the works of man, are not like clocks and watches of his making which run well for a while but get sooner or later out of order.

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<sup>1</sup> Ys. xlv, 3-8.

The Gathic passages above quoted tell us moreover that the main design of its holy author is to teach us to see God not only in Nature, in the various phenomena of Nature but also in the various phenomena of the human soul, such as the love of the son for his father. Our Zend-Avesta perpetually points out to us that it is not only the exterior world that proclaims the existence of a Personal God, Ahura-Mazda; but there is also an inner and spiritual or invisible world that bears witness to His Existence, His Omnipresence and His Personality: "He who will point out to us the right path of spiritual profits, (the spiritual wealth) of the corporeal and the incorporeal worlds, of both the veritable worlds, (ahyâ angêûsh haithyêng) where Ahura-Mazda dwells.....may obtain the better than the good. (such a man) is an offerer to Thee, O Ahura-Mazda! Thy faithful follower and is wise and bountiful."<sup>1</sup> "O Thou Righteousness! when shall I, having become learned or enlightened (vaêdemnô), see Thee, and Obedience (to God) and (finally) see the (very) abode or Heaven of the Most Bountiful Ahura-Mazda.....?"<sup>2</sup>

So it is through the medium of the created Universe and through his own righteousness that man must seek the knowledge of the Creator, Ahura-Mazda and attain to an understanding of His infinite goodness, beauty and perfections. All the excellence and splendour of the Universe, all the endowments of the human mind and heart are the rays that enable man to the divine power and perfection of the Creator and to appreciate and admire them as the author of the Zamyad Yasht did and astonished and overwhelmed with the extent, beauty and grandeur of the wondrous scenes around him, exclaimed: "Numerous and good, numerous and beautiful, numerous and flourishing, numerous and splendid are the works that Ahura-Mazda has made through His Glory."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ys. xliii, 3.  
<sup>2</sup>Ys. xxviii, 5 or 6,

<sup>3</sup>Yt. xix, 9 and 10.

We shall now deal with the relation in which Ahura-Mazda stands to the Universe. Of all things on earth and in Heaven, of things seen and unseen, of the Amshâspends and Yazatas (Archangels and Angels) we have already seen that they were all created by Ahura-Mazda. According to the Avesta as well as the Zend there is no creative process external to and independent of God. The force which has summoned the worlds and all their inhabitants into being and upholds them in being is His ; He wields the force. He is the one Producer, Sustainer and Promoter of all created existence. (dâtar, pâtar, thrâtar Yt. I). He is Ommipotent.

No doubt, the Gathas, the earliest portions of our sacred Volume, teach the purest form of monotheism. However, in the later parts of the Zend-Avesta we find a number of Amshaspendes ( archangels ) and Yazatas (angels) mentioned again and again, ranging in their degrees of glory and greatness between Ahura-Mazda and man. They are represented as Ahura's agents to help His creatures in promoting their prosperity and peace. But no heavenly being, however exalted, is seen on the pages of the Zend-Avesta to trench for one moment upon the prerogatives of Ahura-Mazda. The most exalted Amshaspendes and Yazatas, the holy saints and the Saoshyants are alike removed by an infinite interval from the one Uncreated, Self-existent Ahura-Mazda.<sup>1</sup>

The prevailing tone of the Zend-Avesta does not propound the theory of special or miraculous creations of species in the organic or inorganic world. The Zend-Avesta is free from the first great fundamental error which has been committed by the atheistical scientists as well as some of the Christian theologians. The former by disproving the doctrine of special creations try to obviate the "logical necessity for a God." The latter wholly

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<sup>1</sup> My quotations given in the foregoing pages of this chapter.

denounces the doctrine of evolution. The Zend-Avesta regards the middle course as right.

The Zoroastrian saints seem to have perfectly realised that evolution is simply God's method of creation. They saw Ahura-Mazda to be the Supreme Being of Infinite Intelligence (Mazda) and of Sovereign Power (Khshathra-vairya) and capable of creating and governing the different species of things, animate or inanimate, organic or inorganic, by means of any method He chose. Life and mind on this earth had their origin in the Divine Mind, in the Omnipotent and Omniscient Mind: "O Ahura-Mazda! when first Thou created the worlds (gaêthâoschâ) and made the laws for them; and when Thou didst give us understanding from Thy own (Good) Mind and didst give us also our corporeal life.....and didst give us injunctions or religious commandments whereby we may decide or determine (our actions) through our wishes"<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Zoroastrian saints did not believe and never entertained the notion that life and mind originated on this earth by "spontaneous generation" from inorganic matter. Nor did they ever imagine that the potentialities of manhood resided in the lowest animal organism. Zoroastrianism avoids the error of extremes. It teaches the essential and fundamental distinction between the Absolute and the contingent, between the Creator and His creatures. It teaches that Ahura-Mazda is the explanation of the world and the world is the demonstration of Ahura. We are unmistakably shown through Nature that she depends upon one Ever-acting Creator and Ruler, Ahura-Mazda. The passages quoted in the foregoing pages in which the descriptions of the attributes of Ahura, Nature and of man are given, show that according to the authors of the Zend-Avesta Ahura-Mazda is the Creator and Ruler of all beings on earth and in Heaven. He governs the

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<sup>1</sup> Ys, xxxi. 11,

heavenly bodies and the elements of Nature; He governs all nations and all individuals.

It is sufficiently evident from Yasna xxxi, 11 which is already quoted, that Ahura-Mazda is the Creator and Ruler of man. Man is entirely dependent on Him. He is the source of the light of his understanding and of his will. Ahura's Will or Law must constitute man's supreme rule of action. Obedience to Him, to His word (Máthra), to His will is insisted upon him as the one condition of safety, security, prosperity and peace: "Ahura is the discerning and deciding impartial Judge. So let His will be done."<sup>1</sup> "Indeed, I conceived of Thee as bountiful, O Ahura-Mazda! when (Sraosha, Thy Messenger) approached me with Thy Good Mind.....But I will do what Thou didst say, was best."<sup>2</sup> ".....Thou..... declare not to me words as yet unheard before Thy Sraosha (Obedience) comes to me to go hand in hand with me with holy recompense and mighty splendour."<sup>3</sup> "O Great Creator! (give) me Thy rejoicing and abounding favour when I.....go out to arouse the chiefs .....<sup>4</sup> "O Thou, Lord Protector! in obedience to Thy command (Daênâ) I am firm in the pure Religion and I promise to think, speak and do every righteousness Forgive me Thou (my) many sins; I keep my conduct pure and in accordance with Thy wishes, O Righteous Lord, keeping uncontaminated the six powers of the soul—and in order to obtain the riches of the next world through good thoughts, words and deeds, worship Thee that I may open the path to the shining Paradise.'<sup>5</sup> "The Creator's work must be done according to His wish. Those who disobey Him, lose their glory and their desire of obtaining recompense from Him..... dwindle away."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxix 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ys. Ys. xliii, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ys. xlii, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Ys. xlii, 14.

<sup>5</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol II, 104

<sup>6</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 495.

"The Lord delights in persons who on all occasions conduct themselves in accordance with His wishes and behests and He is displeased with persons who on all occasions transgress his wishes and commands"<sup>1</sup> "By the displeasure of the Almighty the relationship of God in him ceases and by the cessation of the relationship he destroys the protection which the Deity exercises over him and by the destruction of such protection he is liable to cast himself into the abode of darkness and misery. By gratifying God one attains to close relationship with God and by His protection man attains to both kinds of excellence of this world and of the next."<sup>2</sup> "I inquire of Thee this, O Ahura! tell me rightly that holy Faith which is of all things the best and which.....shall prosper my lands.....O Ahura-Mazda! all my (good) wishes entertained through my wisdom may turn towards and seek Thee."<sup>3</sup>

Thus, then, man is immeasurably dependent upon Ahura-Mazda. Our sacred Volume tells us that an intimate relationship exists between the Divine Being and mankind. Man has constant and certain dealings with Ahura-Mazda. He is said to be our Father, Brother and Friend: "He who hates the Daêvas and those mean or evil men holding Ahura-Mazda in derision, and honours Him (Ahura) through the Saoshyants' Religion, has got as his friend, his brother and father, Lord Mazda."<sup>4</sup> "The medium of goodness in men is the natural gift of virtue from the Creator, Ahura-Mazda, the Father and Lord of the Creation."<sup>5</sup> "Be it known that God is intimately connected with the world and is kind to it as to His own born child. God loves His Creation and tries to keep it at a distance from (Aharman). For it is not by a child's loving father that it is injured but by the father's enemies."<sup>6</sup> "Whoever is a friend into the worshipful God, never perverts the thought from the friendship of the Lord."<sup>7</sup>

1 D. D. Dk. Vol. ix, P. 624.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 356.

3 Ys. xlv, 10

4 Ys. xlv, 11.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 323.

6 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 441.

7 D. P. Dk. Vol. Bx k, vi, P. 6.

The statements made in the above passages are calm statements of a literal truth and not a figure of speech. There is no truth more certain than that Ahura-Mazda is our Father and that all that is most tender and most gentle on earth is but the merest shadow of the boundless sweetness and affectionateness of His Paternity. The beauty and consolation of this idea surpasses words. It destroys the sense of loneliness in the world and puts a new colour on affliction. He is Father not in name but in all reality. The tie comes out of creation. The Creator has a marvellous sensible love for His creatures with which no earthly affection can compare for indulgence and tenderness: "All the prosperous states of life which have been enjoyed in the past, have been enjoyed now and shall be enjoyed in the future by men," grant me in Thy love (O Ahura). And make our bodily life happy through strength and health by Thy Good Mind, Sovereign Power and Righteousness."<sup>1</sup>

As Ahura-Mazda is our Father, we must attribute to Him Omnipotence just as we in our childhood attribute practically omnipotence to our fathers. There is something reliable and trustworthy in paternal love, something ultimate in a father's love. Fire will not burn us if he be near. Nightly terrors disappear in his presence. The Zend-Avesta tells us in one of the Avestan Fragments that Ahura-Mazda is not farther from every one of us than is our nose from our ears.<sup>2</sup> Since, then, Ahura is our Father and we are His offsprings and since He is omnipresent, since He is so near us as the nose is near our ears we may by the analytical process of the mind know some of His attributes: "And, therefore, as the first I conceived of Thee, O Ahura-Mazda! as the one to be adored with (our good) mind, as the Father of the good mind within us, when I beheld Thee with my (enlightened) eyes (or mind)

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1 S. B. E. xxxi, Ys. xxxiii, 10,

2 S. B. E. Vol iv, P. 289.



as the real maker of our righteousness, as the Lord of the actions of life.<sup>1</sup>

Ahura-Mazda is not only near every one of us but He takes great care for every one of mankind. He sees everything and decides everything with regard to man. *nôit divjaidhyâi vîspâ hîshas ahurô* = Ahura-Mazda is the all-viewing Lord and (therefore) not to be deceived.<sup>2</sup> He constantly watches him; discerns his thoughts and intents of his heart; sees with infinite precision the state of his will and knowing all the outward circumstances to which man is exposed, He possesses an infallible certainty of the choice he shall make between good and evil: "The questions that are asked openly or secretly or (what decision soever we may make.....) and the man who for the smallest sin suffers from the heaviest penance, on all with Thy sharp eyes Thou art gazing with Thy Righteousness," "I ask Thee this, O Ahura-Mazda! What is happening now and what will happen in the future; what reward for the good deeds of the righteous and what (punishments) for the wicked (are assigned)....."<sup>3</sup> "I considered Thee as bountiful. O Ahura-Mazda! when I beheld Thee as supreme in the generation of life, when, as rewarding deeds and words, Thou didst establish evil for the evil and good for the good....."<sup>4</sup> "Ahura-Mazda by His power of comprehending everything, is truthful and the Judge of all. Those who cannot comprehend everything, cannot deal out impartial justice to all. But God gives due justice to him who has been wronged by an unjust judgment."<sup>5</sup> Ahura-Mazda is a righteous God who justly and impartially decides and gives reward to the righteous and punishes the wicked.

According to the Zend-Avesta He constantly hurls over the heads of sinners the most alarming threats.<sup>6</sup> In these threats we

1 Ys. xxxi, 8.

2 Ys xlv, 4.

3 Ys. xxxi, 13 and 14 and the rest.

4 S. B. E. Vol. xxxi, P. 100.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, 473

6 Vend. Chaps. 3-8 etc.

have the most signal of all proofs of His mercy. What else did He ever design by them than to afford those sinners the motive to avoid sin?. As one shrewd observer has said, the threatening acts like a shield; it provides us the opportunity either of taking to our heels in good time or of assuming an attitude of self-defence.

The whole intention and object of the alarming threats and punishments is that man should adhere to Ahura-Mazda and to His Will or Law (Daênâ). "O Ahura-Mazda ! he who would keep his mind better and more holy, would adhere to the Daênâ close in word and in deed. His will and wish must be consistent with his own creed; and in Thy understanding his end shall be in many ways."<sup>1</sup> Thus, then, there are two things by which he is able to adhere to Ahura and to His Law (Daênâ), by his mind and will. This adhesion as we see in the above quoted passage, is chiefly through good thought, good word and good deed, through humata, hûkhta and hvarshta, that is, through love. Love is the most powerful way of adhering to Ahura. The end of it is to make man good and loving.

It should be observed in this place that the Zoroastrian Religion is not a theory, not a practice but a life of love and loyalty to Ahura-Mazda. According to the Zend-Avesta man is not what he thinks, not what he speaks, not even what he does but what he loves and untill he begins to love Ahura, he is not a true Zoroastrian: - "...and for myself likewise I would seek the sheltering leadership within Thy Realm; most chosen and foremost may we be (within Thy kingdom) for all duration."<sup>2</sup> ".....But in my mind is the friendship (urvâjenâ) of Ahura-Mazda; may we be Thy Messengers; may we hold back those who hate and give you offence."<sup>3</sup> "If you are thus in verity, O Mazda, with the righteous Order.....then show me a sign.....how by offered worship and praises more

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<sup>1</sup> Ys, xlviii, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ys, xlix, 8,

<sup>3</sup> Ys, xxxiii, 1.

devoutly, I may come near you..... "I know none other than you....."<sup>1</sup> "O Mazda! I would beseech of Thee for a sight of Thee and for conversation with Thee....."<sup>2</sup> "Him (Ahura-Mazda) in hymns of homage and praise would I wish to faithfully serve, for I can now see Him clearly with my eyes.....Him who is Ahura-Mazda."<sup>3</sup> ".....Thus, therefore do we worship Him for His Sovereign Power and His Greatness which are beneficent..... We worship Him with our bones and with our flesh....."<sup>4</sup> "Praises, and songs and adorations do we offer to Ahura-Mazda..... And to Thy Good Kingdom, O Ahura-Mazda! may we attain for ever and a Good King be Thou over us,.....so mayst Thou be to us our life and our bodily vigour, O Thou most beneficent of beings.....Let us win.....long life.....and through Thy will may we be powerful.....Thy praises and Mâthra-speakers may we be called, O Ahura-Mazda! so do we wish and not to this may we attain....."<sup>5</sup> ".....and grant us that reward which Thou hast fixed for our souls, O Ahura-Mazda!.....and now a part of it (do Thou grant us) so that we may attain to friendship with Thee and Thy Righteousness for ever. And do Thou grant us righteous men who are both lovers and producers of the Right as well....."<sup>6</sup> "He who performs the worship of God without any doubt as to God.....(is) the child of God and his place is in Heaven."<sup>7</sup> "It behoves us, as far as it lies in our power to pay homage to worship Spenâminô, Ahura-Mazda, the Creator of the good creation with thought, word and deed, for His gift life and body. And for the providence underlying all His creations, we ought to sing His praises, render obeisance unto Him and be thankful to Him as it behoves His creatures to be. And in order to propitiate Him (the faithful) should with one accord

1 Ys. xxxiv, 6 and 7.

2 Ys. xxxiii 6.

3 S. B. E. Vol. xxxi, Ys. xlv, 8.

4 Ys. xxxvii, 2 and 3,

5 S. B. E. Vol. xxxi, Ys. xli, 1-5.

6 S. B. E. Vol. xxxi, Ys. xli, 1-3.

7 D. D. Dk Vol. xii, P. 76.

worship and glorify Him by means of yajashne or invocation.”<sup>1</sup>  
 “An open acknowledgment should be made of the fact that these gifts have been given by the Lord (Ahura) for (His) love of us. We should render thanks to the Lord for this act of His. And one should offer Him praises prayers and supplications.”<sup>2</sup>  
 “Be it known that thanks giving to God for the reward of merit is binding on man because of the existence of a protective intuitive sense in his conscience”<sup>3</sup> “In praise He ought to be glorified first; in the yajashne ritual.....How should the Almighty be extolled? by means of religious wisdom, truth and charity. Because thereby He is sufficiently glorified and man receives a reward for it The worship of the Creator is an evidence of good virtues.....and a means of His creature’s communion with Him. There are certain kinds of praise, prayer and adoration which do not in the end reach the Creator... . . .”<sup>4</sup> “The creatures are for the performance of what is desirable for the Creator and the performances of what is desirable for the Creator are the worship of the Creator who is a Friend to His creatures and the contention with the friend who is an enemy to the creation of the Creator.”<sup>5</sup> All these quotations from the best and the most authentic parts of our sacred Book, besides showing the goodness, greatness and glory of Ahura-Mazda, embody the command not to rest content till we have learnt to love Ahura-Mazda to the very utmost of our capacity; to love Him with a love that will lead us to turn our thoughts instinctively to Him; to love Him with a love the fruit of which will be a spirit of self-sacrifice such as will seek and find its satisfaction in labouring for Him. A love like this gathers up into itself a man’s whole life, all his conscious thoughts, words and acts, subordinating and directing them all to the devoted service of Him. A love like

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1 D. D. Dk. Vol. ix, P. 641.

2 D. D. Dk. Vol. ix, Ps 642 and 643

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 360

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, 391.

5 S. B. E. Vol. xviii, Chap. III, 677.

this elevates and ennobles and gives force to a man's character as the love of no human friend can elevate, ennoble and strengthen. To know Ahura better and to love Him better is the worthiest object of man's ambition. For intimate knowledge and passionate love inevitably lead to earnest imitation, and in the earnest imitation of Ahura lies all the possibility of Zoroastrianism.

The command thus given by our sacred Book to love Ahura with all the heart, mind, soul and body is in harmony with our nature; all our affections, sensibilities, faculties and energies are designed to be directed towards Ahura. The end and aim of our life is fellowship or friendship with Ahura. Thus, then, as we have seen in the above-given quotations, the faithful is most urgently required to seek the friendship, the face or sight, presence of and union with Ahura-Mazda ; to keep him self always within His sight, presence and companionship by acts of love and adoration; to imitate Him and to be like Him in his thoughts and acts: "I would ask Thee such a question as this: How such a wise man as he..... may become like Thee (thwâvâs) and through which actions he may so become."<sup>1</sup> ".....asha-vahishta asha-sraêshtha dare:âma thwâ, pairi thwâ jamyâma hamem thwâ hakhma=Through the best and the most beautiful Righteousness may we see Thee (O Ahura), may we come around about Thee, and attain to Thy perfect companionship."<sup>2</sup> "Be it known that the scions of the family wherein resides divine reason which is in communion through prayer with God and the angels are the ones marked out for supremacy... .... They possess great righteous strength. They are to be blessed with abundance of male offspring."<sup>3</sup> "The communion is that wherein with regard to the thought, the word and the deed and with all rectitude one is attached to

<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxxi, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ys. lx, 11.

<sup>3</sup> D. P. Dk Vol. vii, P. 427,

God and the good ones and does not ever corrupt that attachment.”<sup>1</sup> “It is said that every person should highly observe within his own self at least three times every day thus: “Am I in company of God or of the Devil?” And if he is in the company of God then he ought to entertain God within his own self still more and if he is with the Devil, he ought to thrust him powerless out of his own self.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus Ahura-Mazda is represented in the Zend-Avesta as the most majestic, the most glorious and the most worthy Being whom the true Zoroastrian is required to pay the honour and homage due to Him; whom he should pay the tribute of his homage with his outward as well as inward faculties, with his external as well as internal worship, with acts such as offerings, prayers, charity, obedience, humility and so forth. The Law (Daēnâ) of the Zend-Avesta has relation both to that inward reverence which man owes to Ahura-Mazda as well as to the outward worship which he should offer Him: “Him in our hymns of praise and homage would I now honour and adore; for now I see Him clearly with my eye, Lord of the Good Mind, Word and Action. To Him I would carry my songs of praise in Heaven, Garonmâna,”<sup>3</sup> “Him with our Good Mind we seek to honour or adore who desires to come to our help in weal and woe.....”<sup>4</sup> “These good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, these Haomas, meat-offerings, and Zaothras, this Baresman spread with piety, Hauivâtât and Ameretât (the water and the plant),.....Haoma and Haoma-juice, the wood, and the perfume..... and the timely prayer with blessing and the heard recital of the Gâthâs and the well-spoken Mâthras, all these we offer and make known and announce with celebrations and present them to Ahura-Mazda, the Creator, the brilliant and glorious (rayômand and khoremand) the greatest

1 D. D. Dk. Vol. x, Bk. vi, P. 12.  
2 D D Dk. Vol. xiii, P. 1,

3 Ys. xlv, 8,  
4 Ys. xlv, 9,

and the best, the most beautiful, the most firm, the wisest and the One whose body is the most perfect, who attains all His aims and objects through His Righteous Order, who disposes our mind aright, who sends His joy-creating favour or gift afar, who made us fashioned us and who has nourished and protected us, who is the most bountiful Spirit."<sup>1</sup> "Then whatsoever deeds I shall do one after another, these deeds will be held in the eyes of the people as having (great) worth through good mind; O Ahura-Mazda! the stars, the sun, and the Aurora which is the forerunner of the day-light, are through their Righteous Order the givers of Thy praise"<sup>2</sup> These passages are quite sufficient to show the most grateful and reverential thoughts and feelings of the faithful towards God, Ahura-Mazda, .

So, after a careful study of the Zend-Avesta we cannot but come to the certain conclusion that Ahura-Mazda is the Supreme Reality to which all Nature bears witness. He is the veritable Maker and Ruler of both the veritable worlds, material and spiritual: "Mayst Thou, O Ahura-Mazda! reign at Thy Will and with a happy rule over Thy own creatures....."<sup>3</sup> He is the One Unchanging and Most Bountiful Spirit."<sup>4</sup> He is the Self-existent, Omniscient, Omnipotent and Omnipresent Eternal Being. "The Deity is infinite in time by reason of His miraculous wisdom. The existence of the Omniscient Lord is eternal in time by reason of his eternal power"<sup>5</sup> Ahura-Mazda and the region, religion.....and the time of Ahura-Mazda were, are and ever will be.....The complete sovereignty over the creatures of Ahura-Mazda is in the future existence and that also is unlimited for ever and everlasting.<sup>6</sup> "For, above those who are finite or proportioned, the Lord is infinite and unproportioned, By infinite and

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1 Ys. iv, 1 and 2, Ys i, 1.

2 Ys. i, 10.

3 Ys. viii, 5: also Ys xxxi, 8 and Ys. xliii, 3, and etc.

4 Ys. xxxi, 7.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 416.

6 Bund. Chap. i, 3 and 7.

unproportioned is meant that the Lord, being the Creator of the whole creation and the bestower of existence upon it, is known in that relation to the creation. And those who are proportioned, are the Anshâspends, Ijads, the sun and other stars and generous kings and other persons."<sup>1</sup> "The Lord of Existence is manifest through every existent and created thing pertaining to Him.. .....And before the work of the Lord was promulgated through the Spanaminô, He himself existed. And the existence of all is owing to the Self-existent.....The Creator is able through His perfect knowledge, all sufficient power and entire control (over all) to create as much profitable creation as is wanted. And there is no one who is high in wisdom, possessed of most knowledge.....like Him."<sup>2</sup>

So we have sufficiently proved by means of the passages from the most important books of the Zend-Avesta that Ahura-Mazda, God of the Zoroastrians, is the most Perfect Being. He is the Personal God, He is really and essentially distinct from the Universe<sup>3</sup> Zoroaster and his disciples never merged the Maker and Ruler of the Universe, so gloriously free in His creative and providential action, into any conception which identifies Him with the work of His hands or which reduces Him to the level of an impersonal quality or force. Such is the doctrine about God in the Zend-Avesta against which Pantheism and Materialism raise the standard of revolt.

Now I have so far spoken on almost all the important points in regard to Zoroastrian Theology, about God. Questions such as those of Nature-worship, Fire worship and Dualism, I have discussed at sufficient length in my former volume: "Zarathushtra and Zarathushtrianism in the Avesta." However, the question of Dualism requires some further

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. ii, P. 114.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. i, 33 and 34.

<sup>3</sup> Ys. xliv, 2-7.



explanations, and they will be given in their proper place in the next chapter in connection with Spenta-mainyu and Angra-mainyu; so I shall here pass over the subject with a few following remarks.

It is generally believed even by the students of the Zend-Avesta that the Zoroastrian doctrine of God makes Him contending for His throne with another; that it personates evil in His opponent; that it makes evil an actual positive thing, having distinct being in Angra-man; that man can separate himself from Ahura-Mazda and join himself to the Evil spirit, Ahreman.

We find, no doubt some discrepancy or inconsistency in the doctrine about God in some places in our later Scriptures but our original true doctrine, represented perfectly as it has been in the oldest portion of our Book, the Gâthâs, is the doctrine of an absolutely Good Being, Ahura-Mazda. We have already shown that. We have shown that to Ahura-Mazda evil does not belong and no being that has been created by Him, can belong for ever to a negation. In the Universe of Ahura-Mazda *there is no such thing as evil*. Therefore man cannot be eternally joined to evil or be destroyed with evil. We shall see in the following chapter that Angraman or Ahreman with all its offsprings will be destroyed by Ahura-Mazda and by all His faithful creatures and the worlds, material and spiritual, will eventually become entirely free from evil as they were in the beginning.

Ahura-Mazda created the worlds fair and beautiful to look at. Why did they not ever remain so? God can make roses as easily as He can make thorns. Why, then, so many thorns? God can make good, fair and ripe fruits as well as sour fruits. Why, then, so many of sour fruits? Ahura-Mazda has created man good and beautiful. He can make and keep him robust in body and mind. He has the power to keep back

diseases and sins and woes. Why, then, are there so many diseases and sins in man? These are the questions and many more which we will perhaps be able to answer and solve when we get into a higher sphere of knowledge and surroundings. If we were to attempt to answer them under our present circumstances and surroundings, we are sure to lose ourselves into intricacies which we cannot rationally solve.

Many dealings of God with us are inexplicable. The rain was a great mystery to the ancients. They could not understand how the water should get into the cloud and getting there how it should be suspended or falling why it should come down in drops. After all the brilliant experiments of Dr. James Hutton and other scientists there is an infinite mystery about the rain. 'There is an ocean of mysteries in every rain drop. If, then, we cannot understand one raindrop, we should not at all be surprised, if we cannot explain God's dealings with us.

Now before concluding this chapter I think it necessary to give a few out of many ways of explaining God's existence and of renouncing truth. Pantheism tells us that it may be quite as divine and profitable a thing to wander in error as to attain to truth. According to Pantheism God is world and the world is God. This teaching is contrary to our Zoroastrian Religion as well as to reason and science. All men are not one man, all animals are not one animal, all organisms are not one organism, neither are all things one thing and still less are they God. It is unthinkable that one and the same substance should be both rational and irrational, or good and evil. "On the Pantheistic hypothesis," says Schopenhauer, "God, the Creator of all things, is the one eternally tortured Being and every passing instant sees Him dying anew upon this earth. Being means nothing more than an aggregation of non-cohering parts. This is absurd. To call God merely the sum of all things is to attribute to

Him a material personality ; for matter must form a constituent element of the Deity when regarded in such a light. It is impossible to think of one God existing under such an innumerable divided form and under divergent and contradictory conditions."

Now what does Spiritual Panthesim inculcate? It tells us that everything is Mind and that there is but one Mind, which is God. Our bodies, the stars, the trees, the rivers, the walls of a building have no real existence but are only ideas of mind, some thing like the visions that come before us in dreams all unreal, without actual existence. What we call sickness or sin, is only a belief and that belief is unreal. It has no substantial reality. Once get the belief destroyed and you have destroyed all sin\*and sickness. You may go further than this and destroy death also, for there is no death. You get rid of the belief in 'disease, s'in, or death and you get rid of them all.

Now let us ask what would be the result of the acceptance of this Spiritual Pantheism? If you accept it, you must cease to believe in the existence of matter; you must ignore your individual consciousness; you must not think of a personal God, nor believe in actual sin. According to Spiritual Pantheism neither man nor God has personality. Man is an emanation from God. Man is God. Matter or the body is only a fiction of the Mind. It comes into being only when we think of it. Sickness, sin death and all other evils are imaginary. Now let us examine the grounds on which this teaching stands. First of all it is antagonistic to all the learning of the day, so far as the study of the physical sciences goes. If there were no matter, sciences such as botany and astronomy, and for the matter of that any science at all, would be a vain and useless undertaking for man. It should be observed besides that the same logic which would enable one to prove the non-existence of matter,

would certainly prove the non-existence of spirit. As is said by a writer : "If my consciousness of my bodily members and their states be not trustworthy, then nothing to me is trustworthy.

From Pantheism we proceed to Positivism or Agnosticism which denies the existence of the Creator and bids us acknowledge ourselves incapable of apprehending the super-sensible. There is another way besides of renouncing truth about God. It is through Materialism which would have us believe in the existence of matter only. Materialism has been the basis of most forms of unbelief. It has encouraged atheism or the denial of God.

Many attempts have been made to solve the problem of the origin of the Universe by splitting it up and referring in turn to motion, space, time, the laws of nature and the primary elements but who has succeeded in explaining any single one of these conceptions without bringing in God?

The realms of fancy are boundless. But the observer who is concerned with realities, can only have recourse to the facts of science. We are asked to believe "may bes" on an enormous scale in order that we may believe the final Darwinian "may be" as to the origin of species. The general trend of his argument is as follows:—All these things may have been ; therefore my theory is possible and since my theory is possible, all these hypotheses which it requires, are rendered probable. There is hardly a direct evidence to show that any of these "may-bes" actually have been

It should always be well borne in mind that as time goes on, materialistic theories lose scientific value and lose ground among the class of men best qualified to judge. An ever increasing volume of scientific opinion is setting itself definitely against Darwinism as an adequate explanation of the philosophy of life and accepts the view expressed by Charles

Robin who had no antecedent objections against it:—"Darwinism is a fiction, a poetical accumulation of probabilities and of attractive explanations without demonstration "

Even Prof. Huxley, the great popular champion of Darwinism, who did more than any other man to spread the new doctrine, seems never to have really accepted its fundamental tenet himself, always appearing shy of Darwinian theories about "Natural Selection" and carefully abstaining from committing himself to any responsibility for it. There is a place where he says: "History warns us that it is the customary fate of new truths to begin as heresies and to end as superstitions; and as matters now stand, it is hardly rash to anticipate that in another twenty years the new generation educated under the influences of the present day, will be wary of accepting the main doctrines of the Origin of Species."<sup>1</sup>

The Darwinian system undertakes to account for all the alleged facts of Organic Evolution by means of the theory about "Natural Selection" or "the Survival of the Fittest in the Struggle for Existence." Darwinism by its own confession knows nothing of Origins, not even of the Origin of Species itself. There must be life already existing before Natural Selection has anything to select there must be species before one can be transferred into another. Is it not evident, however, that the cause which brought any of these into being, must have something to do with the capacities and potentialities by which its future history is conditioned? Darwinism, though it is fifty years since it was given to the world, it remains only an hypothesis based not upon observation or experiment but on speculation.

If no one can fancy that human agency could by any possibility grow roses unless from some stock predetermined to grow into a rose and nothing else, what grounds have we that

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<sup>1</sup> An address to celebrate the Coming of Age of the Origin of Species.

can be called scientific for attributing to a blind struggle for life an incomparably greater potency. We know by experience that when things are not controlled by some principle of order, the lapse of time serves only to make confusion worse confounded.

Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, Darwin's colleague and partner in the discovery of Darwinism tells us that besides "Natural Selection" another factor in the production of the world is as much required as ever, namely, a designer whose mind contrived all these marvels which it is the glory of science to disclose. The conclusion at which Mr. Wallace has arrived is that not only here and there in Nature but everywhere in her minutest operations there is Purpose and Continual Guidance and Control.

At the very end of his life Mr. Darwin himself wrote about one of his critics as follows: "He implies that my views explain the Universe but it is a most monstrous exaggeration. The more one thinks, the more one feels the hopeless immensity of man's ignorance. If we consider the whole Universe, the mind refuses to look at it as the outcome of chance. The whole question seems to me insoluble." Again he writes in one place: "I feel most deeply that the whole subject is too profound for the human intellect. A dog might as well speculate on the mind of Newton."

It seemed to Kant so impossible to explain the orderly processes in the living organism without postulating supernatural final causes that he said: "It is quite certain that we cannot even satisfactorily understand, much less elucidate, the nature of an organism and its internal faculty on purely mechanical natural principles—it is so certain, indeed, that we may confidently say that it is absurd for a man ever to conceive the idea that some day a Newton will arise who can explain the origin of a single blade of grass by natural laws uncontrolled by design.

As the Gâthic passages quoted in the middle of this chapter have pointed out, the Divine Being Himself reveals Himself to us through the Universe which constrains us to seek for it a cause, a cause which can only be the Infinite in a state of personality. We are able to affirm that God is, because our mind which is superior to the Universe, discovers therein the need of a cause superior to it.

There are two self-evident logical axioms; namely, every effect or phenomenon in nature has an efficient and approximate cause; and every cause is commensurable with its effects or phenomena. Both of these axioms everybody admits to be indisputable. Like produces like; fire produces fire. Like causes produce like effects; rain causes dampness. By an examination of the nature of effects or phenomena we can always know the nature of their causes. We cannot at all times study or discern the cause of everything in such a way that we can weigh it in a balance, dissect it with a scalpel or exhibit it on a stage; however we can know its nature with certainty. Thus when we see a spring of water gushing from the side of a mountain, we know the nature of its source or cause. If an analysis of the water reveals the presence of organic impurities, there is no doubt about it and we never attribute organic impurities to inorganic matter.

Solid thinking leads to God. Superficial thinking turns aside from Him. First comes lukewarmness, then doubt and a spirit of rebellion and, finally, hatred and open scorn. The revolt of the intellect against God leads straight to the revolt of the animal man against the spiritual man and the egotism of the interior man breaks forth into the sensuous egotism of the exterior man. He who is not subject to God, cannot subject his lower to his higher nature. The imagination which is the mental seat both of pride and sensuality, becomes intensely active and puts the intelligence under an eclipse. The sense of self-sufficiency arises in the absence of

the sense of God and when man has lost the sense of accountability to God, he becomes accountable only to his own self and then what is there he will not do as is devoid of shame ?

Fredrick II of Prussia used to say that the great mass of the people was canaille with which he would be sorry to have to do if God were left out of count. If there be no belief in God, the tradesman would believe and say: "There is no need to be honest." The thief and assassin would believe and say: "Away with remorse! None but a fool would cherish it." The youth would believe and say: "There is no such thing as virtue." A certain statesman truly said: "When this doctrine 'There is no God', finds its way down to that ignorant mass of the people, it bears fruit in the language of blasphemy. Then follows revolution; blood flows in the streets, the thunder of the cannon and the fiercer roar of human voices, are heard." It must, therefore, be reckoned one of the greatest blessings conferred upon humanity by the Zoroastrian Religion that through it a real faith in the existence of Ahura-Mazda, God, has been established and kept alive in our hearts.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### ZOROASTRIAN PSYCHOLOGY.

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The term "psychology" is derived from the two Greek words, *psyche*=soul and *logos*=treatise. Psychology is the science of the soul. This chapter is devoted principally to the subject of man's soul such as is represented in our sacred Book, the Zend-Avesta. In dealing with the soul of man we have to deal with the origin, nature, faculties and functions; and the aim and end of the soul. We have to deal in these pages with all that goes to make up the real man; with all that in man which survives the dissolution of the physical investiture—all that is worth preserving for the future life.

It must, first of all, be observed that the science of the soul, like every other science, must be studied by and through the observation of the facts and phenomena appertaining to the subject treated. The science of astronomy is studied by observing the movements of the heavenly bodies, the science of geology by a study of the physical structure of the earth, the science of chemistry by the study of chemical combinations and reactions; likewise, the science of psychology must be studied by and through the observation of the phenomena of the soul, or, as they are generally termed, "psychic phenomena."

The soul is the source of all psychic phenomena. The facts which we must study and from which we deduce all legitimate and logical conclusions relating to the science of the soul, consist of observable psychic phenomena. It is, moreover, by reference to psychic phenomena alone that the existence of a deity can be demonstrated. It is only through them that we can rationally demonstrate that man has a soul. Physical science can do neither the one nor the other; nor can it

throw more than the faintest glimmer of light upon either question.

The science of the soul is therefore necessarily the science of religion. To attempt to divorce religion from psychic phenomena is to attempt the impossible. It is only when psychic phenomena are misinterpreted that the cause of religion falls into dispute or that a knowledge of the living God is withheld from mankind. The ignorance of psychic laws has placed gods upon the throne of heaven possessing all the frailties, weaknesses and passions common to mankind. It is this ignorance that has peopled the earth with goblins and ghosts. It is this ignorance that has been the source of those various superstitions that have always terrified the soul and warped the judgement of man. It has created a material hell and filled it with demons, and created a material heaven and peopled it with demigods.

It is the correct understanding and view of the psychic phenomena that constitute the foundation of man's hope for a life after death; and furnish the evidence of the divine mission of those saintly persons who have been instrumental in lifting the souls of men to a higher and moral spiritual plane. In a word, it has constituted a great fortress which has protected man against the assaults of materialism and the consequent moral irresponsibility.

The correct understanding and view of the psychic phenomena constitute the basis of the glorious religion of Zoroaster. The true presentation of such phenomena has enabled Zoroastrianism to successfully inculcate in man the true conception of a higher power. It must be a source of pride and gratification of every Zoroastrian to find that the Zoroastrian Philosophy pertaining to the soul demonstrates Zoroaster's perfect mastery of the subject and confirms our faith thereby in every other doctrine of his religion. It is superfluous to remark that this can be said of no other religion.

The religious philosophy of the Hindoo or of the Christian is founded on a misunderstood, misinterpreted and a partial view of psychic phenomena. They do not seem to have taken into consideration all the powers and attributes of the soul or have subjected them to correct survey or observation. Whereas the Zoroastrian Religion is based on an accurate examination of the entire field of psychic phenomena by Zoroaster and his disciples, the most colossal geniuses the world has ever seen. Not only was the whole field closely surveyed by them but it was surveyed with a full and accurate knowledge of every principle involved, as well as of every attribute of the human soul. That wonderful man, Zoroaster, and his disciples seem to have known as much as it is possible for a human being to know about the multifarious phenomena of the soul. As we read their Psalms, the Gâthâs, we feel that we are in touch with men who not only knew theoretically the ways of the spirit but penetrated every maze through personal experience.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the Zend-Avesta bids man to contemplate Nature in all its various aspects, ponder over and realise the fact that Ahura-Mazda is all-good and that He has created all good with a good object and for a good purpose! "As Thou, O Ahura-Mazda! hast thought and spoken, as Thou hast determined and has done these things which are good, therefore, do we offer to Thee, do we therefore ascribe to Thee our praise and worship Thee....."<sup>1</sup> "Be it known that the Creator on account of His dispensation (i. e. bestowal) of all sorts of excellent conditions unto His creatures is worthy to be glorified and worshipped. Also the glorification of the Creator is necessary on account of the (proof of) His invisibility to the invisible, His omniscience, omnipotence, all-ruling sovereignty and every similar manifestation (of His Supremacy). In praise He ought

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<sup>1</sup> Ys, xxxix, 4.

to be glorified first; in the Yasna ritual His Khashnuiman must precede all.....'’<sup>1</sup> “Yea we worship.....that Deity and Lord, who is Ahura-Mazda, the Creator, the Helper, the Maker of all good things.....’”<sup>2</sup> “Demand of me, righteous man! of me who am the Maker, the most beneficent of all beings, the best knowing, the most pleased in answering what is asked of me;.....,that thou mayst be the better and the happier.”<sup>3</sup> “The Life-giving One (God) is not the sustainer of the adverse creation ”<sup>4</sup> “This is manifest that Ahura-Mazda, all goodness which is theirs, has been from the creation of Ahura-Mazda and all injury which is theirs, has been from Ahriman. And that Ahriman and the creatures of Ahriman have as much goodness as is theirs from the creation of Ahura-Mazda, and as much injury as is theirs from themselves.”<sup>5</sup> “Owing to the previous non-appearance of the fiend, the coming forward of sickness and death unto the creatures of the sacred beings occurred when the fiend rushed in and he rendered the existence of men sickly; he also destroyed and put to death the progeny of animals. Afterwards through lawfully driving him away sickness and death come in turn unto the demons and the healthiness of the righteous and perfect life unto the creatures of the sacred beings.....”<sup>6</sup> “Ahura-Mazda is wishing good and never approves nor contemplates evil.”<sup>7</sup> “Whoever wishes to understand a Creator, should meditate reverently, he should fully understand his own body and soul; he should know who produced them and for what purpose:—”<sup>8</sup>

As already observed in the last chapter, Ahura-Mazda has created the grand Universe; He has created the large worlds, the grand worlds, the most sublime worlds, material and spiritual, the worlds full of comfort, peace and happiness:

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1 D P Dk. Vol. vi, P. 390.

2 Ys. lxx, 1.

3 Vend xviii, 7.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, P. 595.

5 D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, P. 38.

6 Dd, xxxvii, 72 and 73.

7 Divā-i-Mīnōi Khirad, viii, 29

8 Sikand—Gūmānik-vigār x, 2

"O Omniscient Lord! through good mind may I approach you! Grant me for both the worlds spiritual and material, those benefits which can be attained through righteousness and through which I may be introduced to beatitude and glory."<sup>1</sup>

"May that holy man who shows us the straight paths of benefits appertaining to both the worlds, corporeal and incorporeal, where Ahura-Mazda dwells....."<sup>2</sup>

"Such a well-born hero will in the end possess heavenly felicity in both worlds....."<sup>3</sup> "Be it known that birth is a term applied to the first (appearance) in the spiritual world of living creatures. The origin and source of the spiritual (existence) is manifested by the action of force in this world. The invisible soul that has entered into the body, is just like the gold (necessary) for making a diadem, the silver for a goblet or a vessel, the iron for a spade, the wood for a door or a door case, the root of a tree for its fruit and the procreator for the offspring. Other spiritual substances (faculties) which are in the body, exist through the gift of this soul's power. Creation is a term employed to ascribe the advent of the heavenly soul into this worldly existence. The living body exists through the soul that supports it. Just as a woollen thread is made of wool, a diadem is made of gold, just as the fruit is produced by the root and the offspring by the begetter, so also other physical substances subsist by means of their original soul. This original soul is regarded as the support of the material constitution"<sup>4</sup> "The worldly existence is the fruit of the spiritual and the spiritual is its root.....The arising of mankind and other creatures that are visible and tangible, from a spiritual existence which is invisible and intangible is known .....It is possible to know inevitably that this worldly existence which is visible and tangible, is produced and has arisen from a spiritual existence which is invisible and intangible.

1 Ys. xxviii, 3.

2 Ys. xliii, 3 and lx, 1.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 299.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, Ps. 294 and 295

.....''<sup>1</sup> "And also about the creation of the creatures by Ahura-Mazda in the spiritual condition (primarily), and its forward creation in the corporeal;.....''<sup>2</sup> All these quotations prove that Zoroastrianism, as found in our extant Records, is formidably opposed to the most illogical and bewildering conception of materialism. According to our religion matter has no independent existence. The existence of the body depends on the soul and the soul depends on the Supreme Spirit, Ahura-Mazda. The statements of our sacred Volume establish the doctrine of the divine origin of the human soul and life: "When Thou didst give us understanding from Thy own Mind and our bodily life and didst moreover deliver to us injunctions whereby the wisher may place his choices."''<sup>3</sup>

So the spiritual man is no mere development of the natural man. He is a new creation from above. The human soul was not originated on this earthly plane. The soul has its origin in another and a higher plane of existence and it is destined ultimately to return to its native realm: "God had created in the pure and luminous essence holy Zarathusht. And his essence was made in the spiritual world. And at the right time he was sent down to the world as a man invested with the earthly body. At that time when the pure spirit of Zarthosht entered this tenement of clay, a superior kind of light began to flash forth from his house."''<sup>4</sup> "One thing related to this world is the body and the thing related to the invisible world is the soul. And man is formed by the union of these with each other."''<sup>5</sup> The human soul is like a coinage stamped in the mint of Ahura-Mazda and issued from His Divine Treasury to be restored to its Maker at such a time as He shall choose to demand it.

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1 Sikand-Gûmânîk-Viâr viii, 24-34.

2 D. D. Dk. Vol. xvii, P. 55.

3 Ys, xxxi, 11.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, P. 612.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, P. 191.

From all the passages given above we learn that the Zend-Avesta admits the existence of both the regions, *geti*=material and *minôî*=spiritual. Ahura-Mazda created the spiritual world as well as the material world. But it says that the laws of the spiritual world existed first and that it was natural that when Ahura-Mazda, the Highest Spiritual Being, resident in the Spiritual World, proceeded to frame the material Universe, He proceeded upon the laws already laid down. He simply projected the higher laws down-ward so that the natural world would become a visible representation of the spiritual. The study of the natural laws enable us to understand and interpret the spiritual world and to think and live in harmony with it.

According to our Book the spiritual world is not a castle in the air of an architecture unknown to earth, but it is a well ordered realm furnished with many spiritual beings, *Amshâspends*, *Izads*, souls and their *fravashis* and ruled by well-formed laws. Even Huxley, though in a different sense, assures us like Descartes "that the immaterial world is a firmer reality than the material."

There are many arguments which can prove that the Zoroastrian authors were the most critical observers and true interpreters of the Creation; that they were quite right in placing the spiritual in advance of the material, mind or soul in advance of physical structure. There are arguments which lead us to the conclusion that the visible Universe has been developed from the spiritual. In addition to the general proof derivable from the Law of Continuity the more special reasons for such a conclusion are the facts "that the atoms of which the visible Universe is built up, are distinctly manufactured articles; that the origin in time of the visible world is implied from known facts with regard to the dissipation of energy."

Thus, then, as we have seen above on the authority of the Zend-Avesta, the Zoroastrian saints did not assume like

Haeckel that a living organism endowed with a mind owed its origin and existence to a fortuitous juxta-position and final union of certain chemical elements, nor did they trace like Darwin the origin of different species to a series of accidents. We know of no facts which give us a right to suppose that organic life and mind can have their origin in inorganic matter. But the Universe as well as the Zend-Avesta is full of evidence that mind is only created by the Supreme Mind,<sup>1</sup> possessed of attributes and powers not indetical in degree with those of the created mind. And we have every right to suppose, judging by all the facts in our possession, that there is no antecedent mind in organic matter from which the human mind could have taken its origin.

It requires no greater strain upon the credulity of man to suppose a mental origin for mind than it does to suppose an electrical origin for electricity. It would be just as reasonable to hold that organic life and mind had their origin in inanimate, inorganic, insensate, terrestrial matter. It is indispensably necessary to posit an intelligent origin for intelligence; a mental origin for mind; a being endowed with intelligence and creative energy as the progenitor of other intelligent beings endowed with the same powers. This is the natural order of things so far as scientific research has been able to inform mankind.

Magnetic oxide of iron or an iron bar is a good medium for the manifestation of magnetic phenomena. But the magnet does not generate the force. That force comes from without. Similarly man's body is the physical medium through which his soul manifests itself. But it does not generate the soul. The soul comes from without from the Supreme Source, Ahura-Mazda, who has made the body a medium through which the phenomena of life and mind may be manifested on this earth.

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<sup>1</sup> Ys, xxxi, 11.



A decided and authoritative conclusion has now been reached in science that the doctrine of Biogenesis, that is, of life only from life is "victorious along the whole line at the present day." In spite of Tyndall's wishing the evidence the other way he is compelled to say, "I affirm that no shred of trustworthy experimental testimony exists to prove that life in our day has ever appeared independently of antecedent life." Thus, then, the attempt to get the living out of the dead has failed.

Having spoken of the origin of man and of his soul, we come to the principle nature of man, to the nature of his soul and body. As for the principle nature of man the Zoroastrian view is that man is created all good and is given all good by Ahura-Mazda, his Creator, that he is conceived in goodness and shapen in goodness and that during his existence in this world he will shape himself into further goodness, if only he were to make small but necessary efforts. The Zend-Avesta has conceived in full glory the idea that the essential element of man, that is to say, of man as Ahura-Mazda has made him, is good ; "As the first and foremost did I conceive of Thee, O Ahura-Mazda !.....as the Father of our good mind within us, as the veritable Creator of our righteousness, as the Lord of our actions in life."<sup>1</sup> "We offer our praise and honour to the fravashi of Gayômarâ (the first man) who first listened unto the thought and teaching of Ahura-Mazda ; of whom Ahura formed the Aryan nations....."<sup>2</sup> "Through truthful speaking Gayômarâ attained to the blissful life of the Amshaspendas....."<sup>3</sup> "Gayômarâ, by reason of his speaking the truth, went at once into the supremacy of the Amshaspendas. His nature was created for Garôthman ; because of his nature having remained in this world as pure as Garôthman (by abstaining) from the vices of this

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<sup>1</sup> Ys, xxxi, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Yt, xiii, 87.

<sup>3</sup> D. D. Dk, Vol, xiii, bk, vii, P, 7.

world, is admitted by people (on the authority) of the dictum regarding it,.....Gayômarâd having been saved by his own deeds.....”<sup>1</sup> “The Dâdâr has through his omniscience given to all men from the beginning of the creation knowledge for conducting themselves so as to diminish the Drugs. For through the work of such diminution there is the acquisition of final liberation for final improvement.....”<sup>2</sup> “In the beginning virtue was made current (in this world) by the Creator and Upholder of the Universe who by means of their relation (to the Prophet) will restore his creatures and avert their evil in the middle ages of this world.....”<sup>3</sup> “Man is advantageous to the world and works for its welfare who possesses good intuitive sense for studiously exercising his duties.....Accordingly, as he exerts himself and studiously performs his duties in this world in consonance with his faith, he, likewise, giving strength to the angles, aggrandises this earthly life and makes it worthy of Paradise.....”<sup>4</sup> “The Wise and Powerful Lord, Ahura, is not capable of harmful gifts. By his efforts to obtain eternal happiness man is saved from Aharman.” “The saintly Adarbâd, son of Mahrespend, allocated the valuable things of the earth to twenty-five classes. ....Life, wife, children, power and wealth are most specially through luck; piety and wickedness.....are most especially through effort or practice.....; hope, love, goodness, charity and truthfulness are most especially through essential nature.....”<sup>5</sup> “When nature is embellished, wisdom comes forth, and when wisdom comes forth, conscience becomes manifest and when conscience comes forth, sin will not be committed, and when sin is not committed then never will harm happen to one (to man).”<sup>6</sup> Thus, then, the idea that God has made man all good, is the noblest concept of the Zend-Avesta.

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. 1, Ps. 15 and 16

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, P. 245.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 324,

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 374.

5 Dk. Vol. xii, P. 75 and 76.

6 D. D. Dk. Vol. xiii, bk. vi, P. 3.

According to our Scriptures every human being is born innocent and free. A child at birth and for seven or even fifteen years after it, is considered characterless and irresponsible for its acts: "The Druj answered: 'O holy.....Sraosha! This one is my fourth male who, either man or woman, being more than fifteen years of age, walks without wearing the sacred girdle and the sacred shirt.'<sup>1</sup> ".....about the importance of a man after fifteen years of age and when he has heard that there is a law which is good, having sought that law by having enquired about it."<sup>2</sup> "It (a child) should not be punished for any sin it may commit from childhood upto seven years of age, for sin does not at that age touch it. But all subsequent sins should be checked according to its age....."<sup>3</sup> "Sin has no root in it (child) and when sinful it has root in the father. And from eight years till they (children) are men and women of fifteen years."<sup>4</sup>

In Zoroastrianism there is no idea of original sin or even the idea that man is by his nature partly good and partly evil. No past lives, no parent's sins, are visited upon him. No human imperfection is in the way of his battle against Angra-man or Evil.<sup>5</sup> But in man from his very birth lies an immense potentiality for good or evil, an immense power to develop along virtuous or vicious lines, an immense power to defeat the principle of evil (Angra-man) by the practice of Asha.<sup>6</sup> "The harm and evil which arise from mankind are not naturally their own but are owing to the deceit of the fiend. They are from the vileness of the fiends that are such as the malice, wrath, and lust which are mingled with mankind."<sup>7</sup> The natural tendencies of the faculties of man are always for good, and the only task imposed upon man by

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1 Vend xviii, 54.

2 S. B. E xxxvii, Dk. bk, viii, chap, xxxviii, 2

3 D. P. Dk. Vol, iv, P. 263.

4 Shâyast V, 1 and 2.

5 Vend. xix, 4—10.

6 Ibid.

7 Sikand-Gûmânîk-Vigâr iii, 22 and 23

Zoroastrianism is that of regulating those faculties and directing their energies into normal channels.<sup>1</sup> This is a far different idea from that conceived by the old philosophies which regarded all the natural faculties and impulses of man as evil and only evil; which regarded animal propensities as something to be fought and annihilated. On the contrary, Zoroastrianism strongly impresses upon man the truth that good and good alone was implanted in man.

In the Zoroastrian Scriptures man is neither hated nor exalted into a deity. In them he is represented as a wonderful being endowed with divine powers worthy of the incessant care and love of himself, of Ahura-Mazda and of the holy souls and fravashis. Celestial, splendid and priceless are the spiritual powers which are bestowed on man by Ahura-Mazda and which assert their supremacy over the world. In Aogemaidê Ahura-Mazda says to Zarathushtra Spitama: "I created, O Zarathushtra! the stars, the moon, the sun, the dogs, the birds, the five kinds of animals; but better and greater than all, I created the righteous man who has received from me the praise of Asha in the good Religion."

However, in spite of the view which our Scriptures take of the immense powers and faculties of man, it must be noted that they do not assign to man independence. No truth touches our hearts more than the Zoroastrian doctrine of man's entire dependence on Ahura-Mazda as the giver of life or on His Law of Asha for his happiness.<sup>2</sup> This doctrine bids us to believe that man's life, happiness and every thing else are in the hands of Ahura-Mazda. It sets before us a Goodness from which countless blessings incessantly proceed and a Power that can instantly withhold them. It implies the most tender and intimate relationship between ourselves and the greatest of beings, Ahura-Mazda. It awakens us to a sense of habitual

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1 Ys xxxi, 11.

2 My 3rd Chap. of this volume.

thankfulness. It summons us to cherish a devoted love for our Divine Benefactor and gives us a warning against contempt of His Law (Daênâ).

Two elements are necessary for happiness in life ; Ahura-Mazda's gifts and man's cooperation with those gifts. According to the Zend-Avesta man is possessed of power to seek and use assistance from nature and his fellow-men. Above all he has power to seek and use spiritual influence from Ahura-Mazda. Such influence is being exerted upon man through his spiritual faculties and through various other sources. It is exerted upon him even when it is unsought. An Avestan Fragment says: "I, Ahura-Mazda, am closer, O Zarathushtra ! to that which all the material world thinks, speaks and works than the nose is to the ears, or than the ears are to the mouth."<sup>1</sup> In the Zoroastrian teaching the thought: "You ask whatever good you will and it shall be given to you by Ahura-Mazda in one way or another", is repeatedly impressed upon us:— "Demand of me, thou righteous man, of me who am the Maker, the most beneficent of all beings, the best knowing, the most pleased in answering what is asked of me, demand of me so that thou mayst be the better, that thou mayst be the happier."<sup>2</sup>

The Zoroastrian prayers are the aspirations of the soul after good. The prayers of Zoroaster as well as of other Zoroastrian saints were always granted by Ahura-Mazda. Through these prayers which we so often read in the Gâthâs and other parts of the Zend-Avesta, we learn that it is essential that man should cooperate with Ahura in the work of his prosperity and progress. Ahura has made the stream full with sweet water but man must draw from it in his own bucket. God has so formed nature that most of the materials which man requires in life, call for exertion on his part in order that

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1 S. R. E. Vol, iv, P. 280,

2 Vend, xviii, 7

he may secure their attainment. Generally crude material is given and the means of fashioning it to his use; but without man's cooperation his enjoyment of nature is greatly lessened. The purpose of this arrangement is obvious. It calls for in man the exercise of his faculties.

This world is an admirable school for intellectual and active beings. Man's powers of invention, his patience, perseverance, courage, enterprise etc. grow by exertion. And thereby he receives a gratification far nobler than any which passive pleasure can afford. Most wise is this method of Providence. The system is beautifully contrived to give man a field for exertion and withal to inculcate upon him the lesson of dependence: "When mankind was first created by Ahura-Mazda, the Lord, He gave then such a commandment as follows: 'You should exert yourselves in such a way that you may deliver (your) soul....., then we shall render your physical wealth as (your) means, since the salvation of the soul cannot be helped save by yourselves. And men are so much in want that they highly exert themselves for the wealth of this world and they pray to God for the wealth of the soul''<sup>1</sup> Thus, the fruits of life come to man through his own exertion or labour; yet they have immense connections with and are influenced by causes unseen but so essential for his guidance that his own dependence is taught to him even in the very moment of his triumph. But this lesson is taught only to those who are disposed to learn. Man may live on not recognising the Supreme Power of Ahura-Mazda. But there are nevertheless countless blessings which even such men enjoy, which bear testimony to the fact of his dependence on a Higher Power than his own.

It is a well known fact that man cannot learn a science, art or language without aid. It is only through help from

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<sup>1</sup> D. D, Dk, Vol xii, P. 11,

other minds that he can make progress for himself or achieve any important enterprise. It is only by help from the mineral world and the elements that man cultivates the land or traverses the sea. Man's power consists in his ability to seek and use assistance from nature, his fellow-men and from Ahura-Mazda. He is conscious of the limitations and weaknesses of his powers and of their inability to stand alone: "I know, O Mazda ! why I am thus unable to fulfil my wish, and..... Therefore I cry to Thee ;.....desiring (Thy) gracious help for me, as a friend bestows on his friend..... ".....Thee for my exhorter and commander, O Ahura ! I choose."<sup>1</sup> "... ..What saving champion is found to save my herds and flocks ? And who for myself other than Asha (Thy Righteous Order), and Thyself, Ahura ? Tell me,..... ...what help is there for me except Thy Benevolent Mind ?"<sup>2</sup> Is it not wholly consistent with the wise Providence of Ahura-Mazda that he should let His creatures feel their weakness and need of help in order that they may be restrained from pride and learn to the full the lesson of their dependence on others and upon Ahura-Mazda ? Does the Creator refuse to hear the cry of weak human beings when they turn to Him ? No. He hears the cry, immediately grants His help and gives the anguished heart relief and peace.<sup>3</sup>

Now let us proceed to the analysis of man. It was truly said by Sophocles when he exclaimed : "This world teems with wonders but its greatest wonder is man himself. In him the spiritual and the material worlds coalesce " Now what do the authors of the Zend-Avesta see in man ? They see in man first the body (*tanûm*), behind it the soul (*urvânem*) and behind the soul the *fravashi* or *farôhar* which is commonly called the guardian spirit: " He (Ahura-Mazda)

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1 Ys, xlvi, 3 and 4.

2 Ys, l, 1.

3 See the Gâthâs.

made a spirit of observant temperament, which was the necessary soul, the virtuous lord of the body moving into the world. And the animating life, the preserving guardian spirit, the acquiring intellect, the protecting understanding, the deciding wisdom.....the impelling strength, the eye for what is seen, the ear for what is heard, the nose for what is smelt, the mouth for recognising flavour, the body for approaching the assembly of the righteous, the heart for thinking, the tongue for speaking, the hand for working, the foot for walking, these which make life comfortable, these which are developments in creating. And by proper regulation and by the recompense of good thoughts, words, and deeds he announced and adorned.....virtuous conduct..."<sup>1</sup> Thus according to Zoroastrianism, man must be looked at as a complex being. He is flesh and spirit, each claiming due recognition in order that life may yield its proper result. Body and soul are the essential parts of human nature and both are recognised to be the created things of Ahura-Mazda: "When first, O Ahura-Mazda ! Thou didst create the living objects and their laws and when Thou didst give us understanding from Thy Mind and madest our bodily life and actions and didst also deliver to us instructions so that the wisher may place his choices."<sup>2</sup>

The doctrine of the soul as propounded by the Zend-Avesta is one which reflection, experience, observation, and the course of man's life support and confirm. This doctrine hold that the soul is the principle of life in man and in other animals ; that the principle in man is different from that which is found in other animals:—"If a person in this worldly body is not in accord with the soul, he resembles the goshpands and animals having bodily organism, that is to say, that person becomes devoid of (real) human existence."<sup>3</sup> "This

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1 Dd. iii. 8—11 S. B. E. vol. xviii. 3 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 334.

2 Ys. xxxi, 11.



animate material man will attain immortality..... ; which immortality will be of a different kind from that of the goshpands, seeing that these material goshpands are not endowed with intellect. Although these are also animate organisms still they are without that dignified immortal existence. On account of that dignified immortal existence man is never devoid of his (spiritual) personality. For that reason every man who lives in purity in this worldly life, is on the side of immortality.”<sup>1</sup>

As the human soul differs from the souls of animals, so also it differs from the body in which it dwells during its existence in the material world. The soul is superior to the body : “The robân=soul is the ruler over the body. Just as the head of a family conducts the household, and the rider the horse, so does the soul conduct the body.....So while the soul departs from it (body), the body is without the means of performing its functions, and of fighting against and repelling the Druj.....From the disappearance of the soul itself from its earthly embodiment, and by the body becoming divested of the vital spirit, the soul is intent on going back to the original spiritual abode and leaving the material body of this world it departs.....”<sup>2</sup> “In the end, the body is mingled with the dust and reliance is on the soul.”<sup>3</sup> “Ahriman, when he wrings life and wife and child, and worldly happiness of every kind away from man, does not consider that any injury whatever is inflicted by him on that person ; but when he wrings away the soul of a single man and makes it utterly depraved, he then considers that an injury is done complete by him, because this is done (the injury is inflicted) by him (the person) through his own wish and action.”<sup>4</sup> “The body is not of like will with the soul ; food is the desire of the body and also

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, Ps, 353, 354, and 359.

<sup>3</sup> Minoi Khirad I, 23 also Vend. vii, 1 and 2.

<sup>4</sup> Minoi Khirad, xivi, 3—5.

a store of wealth ; righteous action is the desire of the soul and also the gifts which it gives away.”<sup>1</sup> “ He has gained nothing who has not gained the soul, he shall gain nothing who shall not gain the soul.....”<sup>2</sup> “ May the immortal soul have its share in Paradise. And may the pleasure and comfort that will dissipate the pain of the immortal soul, come to us ! ”<sup>3</sup> “ Whosoever has his soul healthy, has his body likewise healthy.....Whosoever has his soul diseased, has his body diseased.”<sup>4</sup> So these statements show that the soul is far superior to and quite independent of the body. As applied to man it embodies the essence of spiritualistic as opposed to materialistic philosophy : “ To him who is in spirit (mainyû) and in deed is the friend (of Ahura), Ahura-Mazda will give Welfare and Immortality..... ”<sup>5</sup> “ This I ask Thee, O Ahura ! tell me rightly,..... ; all others I look upon with the innermost hatred of my spirit (mainyêûsh).”<sup>6</sup>

In the Zend-Avesta the word, spirit (Av. mainyu=Ph. minôî=Per. mînu) is not merely a negative term to imply the opposite of matter. It has distinct connotation. It implies an order of existence which transcends the order of sensible existence or the material order and personality belongs to this spiritual order, the only region in which self-consciousness and freedom can have place. The Zoroastrian saints perfectly believed in the spirituality, personality, immortality, freedom and convertibility of the human soul : “ I ask Thee, O Ahura-Mazda ! this, tell me rightly that.....we may attain through Asha to the perfection of this life (Yâchâ ashâ anghêûsh arem vaêdhyâi). How may my soul increase in joyfulness through goodness (kâ mê urvâ vôhû urvâshat âgêmat tâ).”<sup>7</sup> “ Let him who comes to you desiring

1 S. B. E. Dk. Vol. xxxvii, bk. ix, chap. xii 22.

2 S. B. E. Vol. iv, P. 370

3 Ibid, P. 373,

4 D P Dk. Vol. vi, P. 395.

5 Ys xxxi. 21.

6 Ys. xlv 11.

7 Ys. xlv, 8.

knowledge, be taught *Māthra-spenta*.....so that his mind may be expanded in intelligence and grow strong in holiness.”<sup>1</sup>

“That he may approach us with His Good Mind and that our souls may advance in goodness.....Let it thus advance.”<sup>2</sup>

“The imparting of complete purity to the souls of transgressors.....and improving their enfeebled condition into the eternal immortal nature of the souls of holy men.....”<sup>3</sup>

“So long as man does not improve himself from contact with evil so long does he remain in danger.....It is by improving the soul by holiness; and by making endeavours for righteousness that man is enabled to put off from his soul .....the evil of misguidedness”<sup>4</sup> “He who guides himself by self-interest, does not see that life is as changeable as the colours of the spring.”<sup>5</sup> •“.....The soul of man never (permanently) remains in one single place: since according to its principle (or nature) it is progressing or regressing. As to its progress and regress this is said: ‘As long as man follows bodily desires, then the soul deteriorates.’”<sup>6</sup> “The duration of the soul is everlasting; also it is limited. And the powerful (spiritual) substances that work for the soul for existence, are likewise eternal.....Hence it is manifest that the rational animate being will exist for ever.”<sup>7</sup>

We have seen from the above quotations that, as God does not depend upon the existence of the physical Universe for the continuance of His own existence, so neither is the existence of the soul dependent upon that of the body. In other words, the soul is dwelling in the body just as God, *Ahura-Mazda*, is dwelling in the physical Universe but not inherent in it. The soul does not inhere in any special organ or organs of the body though it employs those organs. Certain it is that it is able to control them all: “Just as the intellectual soul

1 Vend. iv, 44 and 45

2 Ys. lxx, 5.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. 11, P. 88.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. 1v, Ps. 237 and 238.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, 390

6 D. P. Dk. Vol. xi, Ps. 78 and 79.

7 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 301

causes motion in the human body, so the beneficial changes in this world and mobility are produced by the glorious and bright good spirits."<sup>1</sup>

That the true nature of man's soul such as I have described above, was admitted and taught by the noble thinkers and authors of the Zend-Avesta, is evinced by the fact that they repeatedly tell us that the soul of man goes after death into the presence of Ahura-Mazda on the Chinvat Bridge in order to render accounts of its deeds and to receive rewards or punishments from Him.<sup>2</sup>

According to the Zend-Avesta a certain participation in the Divine perfections is found in all things that Ahura-Mazda has created. In all things Ahurā reveals His Glory.<sup>3</sup> In corporeal visible things we find but slight impressions of His Glory, as it were His foot-print merely. Now since Ahura-Mazda is a spirit, our soul by its very nature has a certain likeness of the Divine nature. As we have seen above, it is like Ahura, spiritual, rational and immortal, endowed with free-will; yet our Scriptures tell us that it is finite and differs from the Divine nature. It is similar to the picture of a man which a painter has painted on canvas in colours. This picture reveals to us the form, the features and complexion of the person represented but it always remains far inferior to the likeness that a mirror reflects.

Science as well as every reasoning mind arrives at the same conviction as that to which our ancient Zoroastrian saints arrived with regard to the nature of the human soul. That the human soul is a simple substance, is manifest from the consciousness which each individual has that one permanent subject underlies all the various acts of his mind and will. Such a

<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol vi, P. 410.

<sup>2</sup> Vend xix, 26—31, Vistasp yt 34, 24; Aogemaide, S. B. U, Vol, iv, P. 273, Dd. xvi, xx, xxi, xxii.

<sup>3</sup> Yt. xix, 9 and 10.

permanent subject, which maintains its identity under diverse changes and modifications, is called a substance. Without this unity of subject in the various impressions memory and reason could not exist.

Man is implicitly aware of his spirituality. His life manifests various spiritual phenomena which can not be found in his bone or muscle but are to be sought and found in a region beyond the reach of sense: in his thoughts, ideals, in his syllogisms, judgements, in his behests of conscience and in the exercise of his free-will.

In establishing the doctrine of the soul the general line of reasoning is from effect to cause, from phenomena to their agent. From the acts of mind and will manifested in individual conscious life we are forced to admit the existence of their source and principle which is the human soul; from the nature of the activity is inferred the nature of the agent.

To matter it is absurd to refer the initiation of activities which altogether transcend space. It is absurd to deem mere matter capable of grasping principles and aiming at ideas which are wholly alien to its own essential nature. So beyond all question man is not only matter but soul. The vital principle in man is possessed of a thing which is peculiar to itself alone and independent of matter. This being is termed spiritual. The source of any given activity must be of like nature with the activity itself. The reasoning activity is not organic as is the sense activity. We are, therefore, driven to the conclusion that man's reasoning faculty is traceable to no organic cause but to the root principle of life, to the human soul which alone is capable of bringing it into action.

It is a fact that reason is the source of liberty. Every man who makes use of intelligence and reason, recognises himself as a free agent in respect of his thoughts, words and deeds—free not only from outward compulsion but also from

inward necessity. As Cicero truly observes; "Man feels himself moved not by an alien force but by force within; this it is which constitutes him an immortal being. This force is the soul which is possessed of the power to enfranchise itself from all compulsion. There is no natural compulsion upon man to will what he does not choose to will."

The human soul in its nature is immortal. A being is by its nature immortal which does not contain in itself any cause of dissolution or decay. It is immortal, if it cannot either directly or indirectly by the dissolution of the body be deprived of its existence. The direct destruction of a substance by natural means can take place only by dissolution of its parts. But the human soul is simple. It is independent of the body in its existence and its activity, and continues to perform its essential functions even after the dissolution of the body. The human soul retains the spiritual faculties of thought, memory and free-will even after the dissolution of the body. It does not only retain the faculties but can even develop them after death as before. It can change for the better, and improve more and more until it can attain perfection and go nearer Ahura-Mazda who is the Perfect Spirit. The firm conviction in all that I have said just above, is distinctly found in our sacred authors.

Thus then, as we have shown, the Zend-Avesta vindicates the true dignity of man by proclaiming that man unites in himself two natures, the physical and the spiritual. It proclaims the soul to be a substantial and spiritual principle endowed with personality, convertibility, and immortality. It does not maintain like Kant that the soul is not a real but only a logical substance. It does not like the Neo-Hegelian school unify human and divine consciousness. It does not like the school of Associationalists, Hume, Davis and Sully, contend that the soul is a bundle or group of sensations. It does not like the Agnostics and Positivists, Locke, Spencer, James and

Compte, affirm that the soul is unknown. Nor does it deny like the Materialists, Tyndall and Hæckel the very existence of the soul. On the other hand, the Zend-Avesta tries in every way to deeply impress and firmly establish the fact that the human soul exists and that it is a spiritual substance which is conscious of itself, of its circumstances and of its acts: that it is a substance which is invisible, convertible, free and immortal.

Materialists maintain that the notion of the soul is nothing more than a subjective delusion, a sweet and pleasing dream to which no objective reality corresponds. They deny the existence of the soul though they do not deny the existence of the body, because, they say, they can see and feel it every day.

You, my reader, to whom I speak, are a soul and I who speak to you, am likewise a soul. Now do you, reader! know my soul and do I know yours? What are you and what am I? You see plainly in my actions,—and I see in yours,—a certain reflection of what we are inwardly; physiognomy adds its revelation to that of our works: but can you say you know me and can I persuade myself that I can see you even if you were near. The soul ignores the soul, in as much as their essence is not seen by a direct vision. There is but one remedy for this deficiency, viz. faith.

It is urged that no surgeon has ever yet found the human soul. But it should be borne in mind that the soul should be looked for where it is. The effort to detect the living spirit in a muscle or joint must be at least as idle as the attempt to subject protoplasm to microscopic examination in the hope of discovering life. We are warned not to expect too much.

Again it is urged that because we cannot represent the soul, it does not exist. But we may ask: "Can we form any

material or mental picture of the force of gravitation ? " No, we cannot, and yet it is universally and confidently believed that such a force does really exist.

It is said that the apple which fell in Newton's garden, and Diamond, the dog of Newton, and Newton himself began life at the same point. The material point at which all life starts, is called protoplasm, a clear, structureless, jelly-like substance resembling the white of an egg and made up of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen. "Protoplasm," says Huxley, "simple or nucleated is the formal basis of all life. It is the clay of the Potter." Beast, fowl, reptile, fish, worm, are all masses of protoplasm with a nucleus.

But what is that which distinguishes different animals ? What makes one speak of protoplasm turn into Newton and another into Newton's dog Diamond and another into the apple of Newton's garden ? It is a mysterious something which has entered into the specks of protoplasm. It is something which no eye can see and no science can define. It is a different something in the case of Newton and a different something both in the case of the dog and the apple. Though the same clay, protoplasm is used for all the three, that something which determines this difference between them, is life. The spiritual life of Newton distinguishes him from the dog and the apple.

"We meet with the word-soul, in the languages of all civilised peoples," says Lotze, "and this proves that the imagination of man must have had reasons of weight for its supposition that there is an existence of some special nature underlying the phenomena of the inner life as their subject or cause." That man has a soul, is, and has been since the dawn of civilisation a matter of intuitive perception ; that is to say, all civilised people have felt that they realise in a more



or less definite way that there is in man a distinct entity which is capable of sustaining an existence independently of the body.

The general agreement of view among philosophers upon any given point creates a very strong presumption of the correctness of their view. In the present case, that is, in regard to the spirit of man, it may be fairly maintained that there exists an overwhelming majority of philosophers who amid various differences of view are agreed upon the spiritual nature of man.

Historically man has always believed himself to be a spiritual being. Here and there at intervals the belief has been reasoned out of him. However, under one form or another it has been maintained in every language. It was assumed in the earliest literature of man. Thus, then, we have a solid proof that man believes himself to be a spiritual being. Critical analysis justifies the belief. Those who deny the existence of the soul and its spirituality, should study Nature and they will have much to learn from their contemplation.

It had been my good fortune to visit and see during my lecturing tour in Europe and America some magnificent scenes of Nature, the magnificent, the most majestic of them all being the Fall of the Niagra River, one of the wonders of the world, which precipitates itself over a hundred and fifty feet of sheer rock into the whirl-pool rapids below on its way to Lake Ontario. The Niagra Fall does not idly throw away its waters as it did for untold centuries when it only contributed to the beauty of the scene as one of the most wonderful sights of the world. The Americans and the Canadians utilise their water-power to drive factories, railway engines, tramways and many things else. We too in Bombay have known and realised the advantages of electric energy which is derivable from water-falls, artificial or natural ; and are now actually utilising it to the manifest and growing advantage of our city.

Every year thousands of persons go to look upon this most wonderful sight in America. To give a pen-picture of the Niagra Fall is almost impossible. Neither is its infinite variety of beauty capable of being reproduced by either the photographer, painter or the sculptor.

At its sight the traveller feels the greatest thrill of wonder and satisfaction. From the hills, as one journeys round the falls, one can look down on a spectacle of the winding river, the waters of which seem to make different motions and to assume different colours in different places. The majestic waters flow in their chosen channels. The imagination is dazed by the variety of sights.

The falls look impressive from all the various points of view. They fill the visitors with strong and strange emotions. They inspire the profoundest feeling and thought. With the beauty of the scene that wins admiration and love of the beholder there goes a power and a mystery that compel awe and reverence. In America the traveller constantly hears tourists asking one another:—"Well, Have you visited that remarkable Niagra Fall?" One replies that he saw it last year; another says: "I visited it three years back." But whatever the difference in the dates of their respective visits, they all spoke and reasoned as if they referred identically the same sight. But in fact, none of them could have seen what the others had. Each one had before him quite a different view and a different mass of the water falling. In fact, there is constant, ceaseless, momentarily renewal of the water fall. But in spite of that perpetual uninterrupted change the Niagra Fall stands there. It is always to be seen. It always presents its visitors the same general appearance. It is called by the same name. And all those who visit it, consider that they look upon and contemplate the self same object. It may be asked: "Why so?" Well, the answer is

that in this same phenomenon of the Fall there is something transitory and also something comparatively permanent and lasting. The mass of water that momentarily rolls away from the rocks, disappear from their surface into the lake and quite a new mass takes the place of the former. But though the mass of water is passing away or fleeting, the solid rock is there, stable and lasting. The waters disappear into the waters of the Lake, but the rock, which gives the Fall its essential character and which is the very source of the wonderful phenomenon, is comparatively permanent and lasting. In fact, we see that the rock and the water are two distinct and separable entities so that even if the waters were to entirely vanish, the rock which is the principle cause of the Niagra Fall, would remain.

My dear reader ! I have made these remarks because they are applicable to our present subject, namely, that of the body and the soul. As the Niagra Fall consists of two distinct parts, namely, the water and the rock, so man is made up of two entirely distinct parts: body and soul. The body like the waters of the Fall is in a state of continuous change but the soul like the rock is stable and permanent.

Man's body is in a state of continual change ; its parts are undergoing change, decaying and passing away like the water of the Fall and are constantly replaced. The man's body wears away ; atom after atom, molecule after molecule goes away from the system and has to be replaced or renewed. As a well-known medical man says : " The mouth is a portal through which you receive the materials for a new body and also through which you blow away the worn-out materials of the old body. Every time you breathe, you blow away a particle of your nose, a particle of your ears, a fragment of your eyes, a particle of your brain, an atom of your heart, in short, a part of your whole body. "All physiologists agree,"

writes Dr. Edward Johnson, "that life consists in the constant washing and reproduction of the body particle by particle ; by perpetual pulling down of the old materials and a perpetual replacement of them by new." The same surgeon remarks : " Every time your watch ticks, one human being is born and one perishes in some part or other of the world. But in the human microcosm called 'Man' every time his watch ticks, there are millions of molecules of the old body dissolved and carried away and their places supplied by as many millions of new molecules."

Such is the fact about man's body. Man recollects, notwithstanding, his own actions, feelings, aspirations and ambitions that he entertained some months and years ago. He believes and says he is one and the same person. He is sure that those actions and feelings were his. Now the question naturally arises : What is the link between his present and his past ? How is his identity maintained ? Of course, the link is not his body, the material atoms and molecules of which his body is composed ; because they pass away and disappear like the waters on the Niagra Cliff. We are, therefore, compelled to admit that there is something in man which maintains his personal identity throughout all the years of his life ; and that something is not the matter of which man's body is made up. There must be something which is not passing away from man and is not constantly replaced and renewed but something which is permanent and lasting like the rock ; in one word, there must be some simple substance, a spiritual substance called the soul which is distinct from and independent of the body.

Zoroastrianism, as found in our extant holy Records, is formidably opposed to the most illogical and bewildering conception of materialism. According to our religion matter has no independent existence. The existence of the body

depends on the soul and the soul depends on the Supreme Spirit, Ahura-Mazda.

Now we come to the consideration of man's spiritual faculties and their functions. It is by the consideration of these peculiarly human faculties and functions that we are enabled to discern the immense, yea, the immeasurable difference not only between man and the brute, but, what is still more to the point, between the final destiny of man and the final destiny of the brute.

As I have shown in the preceding pages, man is composed of soul and body. He possesses physical and spiritual faculties. All these inferior and superior faculties Zoroastrianism takes under its care. But it seeks to promote man's happiness by enlivening and perfecting the higher first. These higher powers of man are chiefly ranged under two classes the Intellect and the Conscience. According to the Zend-Avesta man's happiness chiefly depends upon their free and full developments. In Yasna XLVIII, 4 and XLIX, 4 we are distinctly told that man's intellect and will are amenable to discipline. They are his most valuable gifts and capacities which must be developed and habituated to better and holier deeds and must be brought into complete harmony with the Law of Ahura-Mazda. (tḥwahmi Khratâo apemem nanâ anghat). In yasht XXII, 14, conscience is said to be lovely and fair but it can be made much lovelier and fairer. According to Yasna XXX, 4, XLII, 8 and LX, 11, man's perfect happiness consists in the perfection of life, in the best mind, in the purest soul and in the best body. "Be it known", says the Dinkard, "that Ahura-Mazda himself is the Beneficent Spirit and is all powerful in goodness and glory. He is the Giver unto the soul of the power of beholding both worlds and of doing actions for both.....He bestows on man a soul endowed with conscience in this world that he may discern what is good

and may accomplish good deeds....."<sup>1</sup> "Man is enabled to do the work of purity for his soul The intelligence.....and other good qualities which are in man, are means to enable him to form righteous relations."<sup>2</sup> By reason of the spiritual powers, viz., intellect, conscience and will man is like a chieftain over all other creatures of this world.<sup>3</sup>

Besides these powers Zoroastrianism declares a loftier power which is called Fravashi or Farohar. Fravashi is derived in the Avestan language from fra=forward and vakhsh or vared=to grow, to increase, to promote. According to the Zend-Avesta Ahura-Mazda and all his creatures, animate as well as inanimate, have their fravashis.<sup>4</sup> Through the close study of our sacred Volume we clearly see that fravashi is that power of a being which constantly impels it to acts preservative of the individual and of the species, including those which are promotive of improvement and welfare. It requires no effort of imagination or no soaring into regions of speculative philosophy to arrive at the conclusion that the active agency of self-preservation and development resides in every being. It resides in man, living or dead.<sup>5</sup>

The fravashi of a man has the power of intuitive perception and cognition independently of reason, experience or instruction of those natural laws which are good and promotive of the welfare of the individual to which it belongs. Thus the soul through its fravashi possesses the power of perception and cognition of Nature's laws for its well-being and progress as renders on the part of the soul any process of laborious inquiry superfluous. It perceives, and its power of perception as far transcends the power of induction as Omniscience transcends the power of sense. It is, in fact, a

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 328.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. ii, P. 113

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 358.

4 Yt. xii and ys, xxiii, xxv

5 Yt. xiii.

kind of the power of Omniscience for man's well-being and progress and perfection: and the possession of this power by the human soul demonstrates in a way the origin and birth of the soul through Ahura-Mazda, God.<sup>1</sup>

Man's fravashi has the power to combine all the spiritual elements of his being, and to direct them for the purpose of communion with Ahura-Mazda: to open his intellect to the influx of truth and thus to promote his welfare. Man's fravashi is the safe-guard which Ahura has given to the human soul to guard and protect it from every kind of evil. This power of man, that is, his fravashi lies at the root of all efforts towards self-preservation, improvement and progress in every department of human activity. This constant and effective power also serves as the great power that causes the progressive development of mankind towards higher civilisation on lines leading to universal and ultimate good. This is the most significant part of the fravashi.

Zoroastrianism tells us that the fravashis constantly watch over the interest and welfare of the world and its inhabitants, especially of mankind.<sup>2</sup> They always help and promote their happiness and progress. And hence it is that the Zoroastrian is commanded by his religion to reverence them by remembering them, pondering over their goodness, by cherishing love for them, and by showing gratitude towards them on every occasion in almost every Zoroastrian rite and ceremony.

Next to Fravashi the most important spiritual faculty of man is the Intellect. (Av. manang-Ph. minishne.). Every step in the physical, mental, moral or spiritual preservation and development of man is referable to the two primordial faculties, namely, the Fravashi and the Intellect. Zoroastrianism tells us that they rule supreme over all the rest

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1 Yt. xxi.

2 Yt. xiii.

and exhibiting their essential grandeur and goodness it asks us to reverence them both.

Our religion is the great inspirer of the Intellect. It reveals to us the connection of the Intellect with Ahura-Mazda.<sup>1</sup> It tells us that Ahura-Mazda takes great care of man's mind so that it may receive more and more of His Truth. Mind is indeed a noble gift but it is a gift all the same. Man receives it from the Father of Vohuman who is Ahura-Mazda. It is the nature of Ahura-Mazda to love and to communicate Himself; and it is the nature of man to be receptive of that communication. This conception of the intimate relationship between the Infinite Mind and the human mind is the most noble conception that we frequently come across in the Zend-Avesta. We can not, therefore, regard our intellect save with reverence.

According to the Zend-Avesta thought is an inseparable element of the highest life, of the Highest Heaven, or rather it is life raised to its highest power<sup>2</sup> "As the sun is the light of the world and a lamp is ( the light ) of a house, so does the intellect animate with watchful light the lord of the house (i. e. the soul) in the house (the body),.....as also it directs the master of the house to take care of the house So when this (intellect) is separated from the body, the soul is distressed in the body, and the body during life remains insensible....."<sup>3</sup> "A man who is wanting in intelligence but is sound in his bodily members, is neither possessed of the strength of this world nor is he worthy of acquiring that strength. A good intelligence keeps ( a man ) pure of sin. He who is a doer of good deeds, is possessed of good wisdom or intelligence."<sup>4</sup> "The function of intelligence is to search out the thing (truth). And the function of understanding is to treasure up and guard

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1 Ys. xxxi, 11

2 Ys. xxx, 4,

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 354,

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, Ps. 180 and 204,



the thing ( truth ) intelligence has sought. And the function of wisdom is to discriminate things and recognise good and evil and to adopt what is good and reject what is evil.”<sup>1</sup> “ A man’s honest wish should be about doing worthy and solid dignified acts about his mind.....and by these we should try to obtain spiritual satisfaction and salvation for the soul.”<sup>2</sup>

Man’s advancement and perfection consist in the perfection of his actions; the more perfect they are, the more perfect and holy his life shall also be. And his actions will be more perfect as his thoughts are more holy and perfect. So it is his thoughts that lead him to his high and sublime end, that lead him into the Highest Heaven.<sup>3</sup>

Zoroaster and his Religion for the first time revealed to the world the important fact that the primary condition necessary for an individualized condition is that of consciousness (baodhang). Zoroaster who was the master of the science of the human soul, drew the line between the man and the brute when he proclaimed that man’s soul is conscious of itself, of its circumstances and of its acts past and present. He proclaimed that such consciousness was essential to the attainment of immortal life. “ In sickness whatever is given up by him (man) himself during consciousness, is allowable; when he is not conscious, it is not allowable. And on that which he says during unconsciousness one is not reliant and it is not credible but that which he says during consciousness, and that, too, which the same man gave unto a daughter when he was ill, if given by him consciously, even then proceedings are granted;.....”<sup>4</sup> “ He who deceives the saint, shall be ultimately destroyed. Long life shall he live in the darkness..... And this, O you sinner ! your own perverted conscience through your own deeds will bring you.”<sup>5</sup>

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1 D. D. Dk. Vol. x, P. 17.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 491.

3 Ys, xxx, 4,

4 Dd. liv, 7 and 8.

5 Ys, xxxi, 20.

Another primary fact with regard to man's mind revealed by the Zend-Avesta, especially by the Gâthâs, is that it is endowed with powers to perform two functions ; that it is dual in its faculties and functions ; that one and the same mind manifests certain attributes and powers under certain conditions ; and other attributes and powers under certain other conditions. In a word, man has a dual mind, that is, a mind capable of presenting to itself everything in its opposite aspects, good and evil. Man has a soul and mental phenomena belong to one or the other of his two planes of consciousness, namely, spenta-man and angra-man.

Spenta-man is derived from the Avestan root, span=to increase, to prosper and man=to think. Spenta-man is good, beneficent or bountiful thought. From the Gâthâs we clearly see that spenta-man is the faculty of pure intellect concomitant with reason, and springs from a consciousness of rectitude and of power equal to legitimate demands. When properly cultivated and developed spenta-man correctly deduces all legitimate conclusions from the premises presented to it. It is the faculty of the human mind whose function it is to collect, classify, and analyse the facts of observation and experience for the purpose of ascertaining the true principle underlying the series of facts under consideration. It enables its possessor to arrive at fundamental truths by a process of systematic analysis of facts and falsehoods—of proving all things and holding fast to those which are good and beneficent. All faculties, all impulses, desires or emotions that come under the influence of spenta-man, are promotive of the well-being of the individual. All the best, the most useful and beneficent acts of men are the manifestations of the proper, healthy and normal exercise and development of spenta-man and of the will-power ( Av. vasang=Ph vas=will ). The complete agreement of spenta-man and the willing power in man results in the most noble acts of

man and is promotive of his welfare, physically, mentally, morally and spiritually.

The opposite attribute of the mind can be appropriately designated by no other term than that of angra-man. Angra-man is derived from Av. ang=to decrease or destroy and Av. man=to think. Hence angra-man signifies decreasing, destructive or evil thought. Angra-man has many names. In the Zend-Avesta as spenta-man is also called vôhûman, angra-man is called akô-man=evil mind or thought, dregvâo-mainyu=false or harmful thought or mind, druĵ=a deceiver, a liar or a misleader, daêvanâm daêva=the Daêva of Daêvas or the Chief of the Daêvas. Its traditional name is Ahriman or Drug or Ganâminô.

The Zoroastrian saints who have analysed sins, have also consolidated them into a personification of evil or sin: Angra-man. Thus, by means of an allegorical representation every kind of sin, every kind of evil, natural or spiritual, is identified with some one of his offsprings or followers. Flood, plague, drought, famine, starvation, poverty, disease, idolatry, uncleanness, disobedience, pride, avarice, envy, falsehood, deception, backbiting and all other vices or evils are his children and grand-children. All vicious or wicked men are his products. They are the Daêvas or the Drujas who approve the actions suggested by the angra-man in them: "About the souls of those disobedient persons (disobedient to Ahura) who have far advanced in the direction of Daêvas and are for approving the actions of the Daêvas, they are becoming like Daêvas: the soul of the sinner is stated to be of the nature of Daêvas, owing to its remaining much in contact with Daêvas ..... And the soul of the committer of sodomy and of him who causes it to be committed, is stated to be more vicious Daêva than that of other (sinners) owing to its great connection with Daêvas (the offsprings of angra-man). And the

soul of a deceitful Ashmog is stated to be of the shape of a Daêva, owing to its running in the deepest hell.....”<sup>1</sup>

Some two or three hundred years ago, a demonographer gave the names of the ambassadors of evil whom, he thought, Satan sent to different countries: Mammon, as an ambassador to England; Belphegor ambassador to France; Martinet, ambassador to Switzerland, Rimmon, ambassador to Russia; Hutgin, ambassador to Italy: Thanma, ambassador to Spain: But this was all mere guesswork of mythology or superstition.

In our Zend-Avesta we find the great truth that there exists a monarch in reality of all wickedness, a generalissimo in the battallion of all sins and vices: the principal mischief-maker, Angra-mainyu by name. What he does not do, he delegates others to do. As every man has a benignant spirit, spenta-man within him, so every man has within him an obsessing malignant spirit, augra-man, trying to make him think, speak and act wrong. Hence, spenta-man and angra-man are called twins: “There are primary spirits (in man) that have been known as twins. They are independent in their actions. One of them is good or better and the other bad or worse as to thoughts, words and deeds. Between these two the wise choose rightly that which is called spenta-man and not that which is called angra-man which the wicked choose.”<sup>2</sup> “Of these two that which is evil, produces all possible evil results, whereas that which is good or better spirit, chooses righteousness.....”<sup>3</sup> “Those who belong to the Dark Root.....owing to the union of his evil intelligence, are of evil understanding; and owing to that connection.....they are known as sinners..... He of the evil understanding in the cause of sin..... Hence, the nature that is a doer of sinful deeds, does not at all belong to

1 D. P. Dk. Vol. 1, Ps. 14 and 15.  
 2 Ys. xxx, 3.

3 Ys. xxx, 5.

the pure spenta-mainyu, but it surely belongs to the angra-mainyu."<sup>1</sup> "Be it known that if Behman (or spenta-man) live as a guest in the heart of man and Ahura-Mazda be the ruler over his will, then his house is peaceful ; his thoughts possess the truthfulness of the Invisible Abode ; his speech is conformable to reason and his deeds are ( calculated ) to abstain from sin..... If Angra-man be in the heart of man.....the ruler over his mind is the invisible Principle of sin....."<sup>2</sup> "Among the people of this world the nature which is in itself like the nature of the Creator, Ahura-Mazda, is the nature of holy men who are keepers of the principle of good thought, givers of place in their hearts to the service of the spenâ-mainô, keepers in their mind of the commands of Sraosha.....obeyers of the law....."<sup>3</sup> ".....there is an obtaining of the nature of Angra-man by means of thoughts which have reached through an evil mind..... "Hence (man) is of perverse behaviour, an acquirer of death, an instructor of men in death, an injurer of good men.....Owing to which, he is through reason piercing and hurtful..... ...through thought, a perpetual harasser of good things ; through his will, of a nature fit to harass every man.....,"<sup>4</sup> "The reaching of good thoughts into men is from the Spenâ-minô ; and the running of evil thoughts is from the Ganâminô. In men there is a residence of good thoughts as well as of bad thoughts,; from among these.....In the proportion in which a man possesses good thoughts, in that proportion he obtains a high.....or a low abode of happiness. And he becomes unharassed.....by means of innate reason which has good thoughts. Similarly in the proportion in which there is evil thought in him, in that proportion he obtains the abode of fear,.....And by means of his innate capacity for causing harm.....In man in the proportion in

1 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, P. 267  
2 D. P. Vol. 1 Ps. 27 and 28.

3 D. P. Dk Vol. 1, Ps. 57 and 58,  
4 Ibid P, 59,

which there is an acquisition to innate reason, by means of cultivated reason, through the relation of good thoughts ; in that proportion in his happiness..... . Owing to the effect of evil thoughts, just as much of evil understanding of misery, .....therefore, a holy man lives in this world with good thoughts and is disgusted with evil thoughts. He who is of evil understanding, and full of thoughts, that man is irrational and driven from good thoughts.”<sup>1</sup> “ It is in the power of man.....to guide himself towards the wishes of the soul and to do the superior work relating thereto. No other creature in this world thus rules as it pleases.....”<sup>2</sup> “ As the helper of (conscience) is divine or good understanding (spenta-man) which instructs man in the morality of the good religion. ....It is through the spenta-man that righteousness (asha) is approved, thought, spoken and done. It is in opposition to Him that man through angra-man approves sinful deeds, thinks about them, speaks and acts for them, .....Man through his own rule (power) makes himself a prisoner in hell. The accruing of great benefit to the people of the world depends upon their desire to obtain liberation. And owing to having no liking for the evil religion that all men become possessed of rule or control over themselves.....”<sup>3</sup> “ The savior of the soul from this (evil) desire is the divine instinct in man. ....The man who possesses proper courage, keeps the divine instinct (spenta-man) till the end and thereby is very strong and resplendent.”<sup>4</sup> “ Men are inclined to two sides (good or bad).....”<sup>5</sup> “ Be it known that he who preconceives the means of counteracting evil,.....is so by reason of his communion with the all-informed source of remedy (spenta-man). A thoroughly lucid perception is the result of a continuous abiding of vohûman or spenta-man in the heart and of the avoidance of injury of akôman or angra-

1 D. P. Dk. Vol. 1, Ps. 60 and 61,

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, P. 268.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, Ps. 269-279,

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 494.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, P. 333.

man from it.”<sup>1</sup> “Every intelligent human being shall be as capable of avoiding sin as of tending to acts of merit. ....Thus the man of this world is formed always capable of redeeming his soul from sin.”<sup>2</sup> “Whosoever has ill habits opposed to the good qualities such as.....is a demon. ....Whosoever is devoid of good qualities and possesses evil qualities is a demon through human demonism ..... ”<sup>3</sup> Thus, then, we find man, as he is presented to us in the Zend-Avesta, especially in the Gâthâs, possessed of a dual mental organism capable of performing two classes of functions. It is the same mind ; but its powers and functions are susceptible of modification by either external or internal stimuli ; or by the inhibition of activity in certain powers and functions and the stimulation of others to abnormal activity ; all caused by man himself, by his own will and choice. Here the reader needs to be again reminded that according to the Zend-Avesta man is created all good. He possesses the noblest faculties and is free to exercise them for those high functions which alone render his existence in this world happy. There is no faculty, emotion or organism of the human being that has no good use or no good purpose or object. No faculty of the human mind exists without a normal and withal a noble function to perform. We find one class of functions to be good, beneficent, and promotive of man's physical, mental, moral and spiritual powers to the highest degree of excellence within the limits of their respective nature. All these functions are said to belong to spenta-man.

Angra-man, as we have seen, is the concentration of all meanness and despicability. He is the greatest traitor, the most malicious traitor, the mortal enemy that every moment tempts man and endeavours to inflict misery, pain and death upon him, an eternal death upon his soul. It is angra-man.’

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1 D. P. Dk Vol. vi, Ps 412, and 414. 3 Ibid P. 323,

2 D. P. Dk Vol. vi, P. 405,

man's own evil thought or mind that eats, drinks and lies within him and hurts the man and the soul within him:—" Be it known that the unrighteous one himself is so because of his own perverse mind. Whosoever leads an immoral life, his thought (leads him to ) acquire whatever thing he does not need ; and his actions thereby (through that immoral thought) are of the nature of 'frehbut' .....and by acquiring the thing he does not need and by doing the deeds that do not concern him, he (the immoral man) turns to be of the nature of aibibüt. The natures of both these frehbut and aibibüt are devilish in their ways and wicked in thoughts. Whosoever mind is inclined to the ways of good existence, he always turns himself to acquire whatever thing is requisite for him and to perform the actions that pertain to him and he does not wish to acquire the thing that he needs not.....Hence he becomes of the nature of righteous Yazads. The source of that evil knowledge and of every other evil is Ganâmnô, just as the source of that righteous thought and of every other good is Spenâmnô....."<sup>1</sup>

According to the passages we have quoted in the foregoing pages man can most beneficially use or most dangerously abuse his physical and spiritual faculties. The faculties can perform normal as well as abnormal functions. In the undue use and development of both physical and psychical faculties and functions there lurks the greatest danger. When the faculties are abused or not properly developed, they are led into abnormal conditions which produce the most disastrous results both to body and soul.

The habitual indulgence in physical or psychic practices of any kind, grade or character invariably results in some form of physical or psychical derangement or disease ; and if carried to excess or continued long, results in utter destruction and

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 348.



death of the soul or the body of man. This is taught by our Scriptures, especially the Gâthâs and demonstrated by actual facts. Thus, for example, musicians are constantly in danger of the evil consequence of an abnormal use, development and condition of their faculties. No one can gainsay the fact that musicians as a class are either nervous, excitable, passionate or jealous. They use and cultivate their faculties beyond the limits of the laws pertaining to the physical and psychic activities and developments, and consequently physical, mental and moral dangers attend them. Even in ordinary avocations of life we find men absorbed in their profession such as typewriters and composers, beset with dangers arising from immoderate or abnormal exercise of their faculties. But it is useless to multiply instances. The whole principle may be summed up in the general statement that any employment that requires undue exercise or inordinate use of the faculties of man in any direction whatever, is attended by abnormal physical and psychical conditions, that is, by evils both to body and soul.

Angra-man is the chief source of man's abnormal physical and psychical activities resulting in various sorts of immorality, vice, crime, insanity, uncleanness, disease, death or destruction. Angra-man deduces all false, wrong or absurd conclusions from the ideas, facts or premises presented to it. The conclusions of spenta-man are always logically correct, whether the premises are true or false. According to the Zend-Avesta, especially the Gâthâs, all evil or destructive acts of man are the evil results of angra-man and the willing power of man asserting itself in a wrong and crooked way. "Be it known that he is prudent among men who abstain from uttering and committing the sin suggested by his (evil) mind (angra-man). And the more prudent is he who abstains from thinking of the sin which has occurred to him in his desire. And the most prudent is he who adopts ways and

means that his will may refrain from sin.”<sup>1</sup> “.....that man is noble in person whose desires are ruled over by God. .... On the other hand he who is evil minded ( angra-man ), injures himself and benefits his enemies by his evil wishes,..... and is like a clumsy rider who takes his horse near the enemy to be killed himself.”<sup>2</sup> “The demonlike man on account of his hostile propensity to the creatures of Ahura-Mazda exists for the purpose of wounding, distressing and killing animate creatures as well as for deceiving, corrupting and exposing the soul to demnation. For this the apostate demon man is doomed to undergo affliction and imprisonment in the infernal abode.”<sup>3</sup> “Man does evil owing to the false knowledge of the evil-minded ( angra-man ). That which is false knowledge is immoral and by this immoral false knowledge (man) does evil.....”<sup>4</sup> “He who loves angra-man’s splendour is called angra’s self. Because angra-man predominates in him and his conformity ( with angra ) contributes to promote the perverse thought.....and likewise conduces to the abiding in him of hurtful and refractory demons.”<sup>5</sup> “The acquisition of strength by the drujas or demons is through the passions. And those ( the drujas ) who advance in bodily form are the Daeva-worshipping rulers, wolves, monsters, who are the destroyers of the world.”<sup>6</sup> “For, evil passions, ( such as ) ambition, envy, revenge and other destructive, hurtful and pain-giving Drujas ( passions ) remove the wisdom of man from his body and by guiding (man) towards worldly good,.....snatch away the good of the coming world.”<sup>7</sup> So angra-man and its off-spirings are temptations and they assail man continually and under the most varied forms.<sup>8</sup> Temptations are specious suggestions which flash into man’s Mind, insinuated not unfrequently under cover of lawful desires.

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 392.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 447.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 407.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 443.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 298.

6 D. P. Dk. Vol. i, P. 44.

7 D. P. Dk. Vol. ii, P. 80.

8 See Vend, xix, 4—9.

The suggestions impel him to baneful fancies, immoderate passions and appetites. They lure man towards all that is arrogant, undesirable, and disdaining towards everything that induces insincerity, unjust dealing, discord and disorder.

According to the Zend-Avesta, Ahura-Mazda is not the Tempter. Man's mind finds materials for temptations in his concupiscence, fancies and senses. Man weaves seductive pictures for the imagination, infuses a false sweetness into what affects the senses and so inclines himself to evil. Our Scriptures teach that temptations involve neither sin nor imperfection provided the will of man withholds its consent. Men are tormented with a thousand scruples on account of the evil thoughts or suggestions that pass through their minds. But according to the Zend-Avesta this disquietude is a healthy sign of resistance to temptations. Zoroaster himself was tempted. In Vendidad XIX, 5—9 we are told that our Prophet was assailed by temptations like any other human being. Angra-man appeared before him and assailed him through his follower, Demon Buiti. But Zoroaster remained firm and resolute and did not yield; whereupon angra-man and his follower Buiti lost courage, because they were disappointed and went back to their own region. Zoroaster thus overcame and defeated angra-man by one stroke of his will-power; by the exercise of the principle of asha (righteousness). "Therefore, to drive him ( angra-man ) out is for men a victorious deed. Hence those who largely annihilate the harm-causing works of the Blemish Giver (angra-man).....have been known to be victorious. Those who possess in the smallest degree the strength of Spenta-man are capable of causing harm to that powerful Druj (or Angra-man).<sup>1</sup>

All that we have said above, helps us to realise the weakness of angra-man and shows how little he is able to

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, Ps, 203 and 209,

achieve against man as he cannot seduce man against his own will. It is clear from the quotations that whilst angra-man cannot conquer a man against his will, man can conquer and subdue angra-man only if he has the will and the wish to conquer. One good impulse of the will is but sufficient to help man out of the violence of unrestrained passion or emotion. According to the Zend-Avesta angra-man is like a chained dog so tied up that he can bite only those who approach him close at the risk of being beaten. He may bark, he may fawn and flatter, as we see in the Vendîdâd, but he can bite no one except him who allows himself to be overcome and bitten by him.

Again in the allegory of the Vendîdâd we have a striking illustration of the deception practised by Angra-man. He dares not appear with an open countenance. He dissembles and pretends to be ever a well-wisher of man. We find in the Vendîdâd Angra-man promising to give Zoroaster abundant riches and to make him the ruler over a number of nations. His whole endeavour is to get Zoroaster to believe that in his hands he would be very happy if only he were to renounce the Religion of Mazda. In a word, Angra-man promises so much as to say: "If you, Zoroaster, come over to my side, you will get from me every possible indulgence, and everything will be done to render you happy." In the statements of the Vendîdâd passages we are given the excellent advice and caution not to form our judgment from the surface or the appearance of things; not to let ourselves be imposed by the exterior which Angra-man may present to us, because it is all false and misleading.

The deception practised by Angra-man is akin to that which bird-catchers practise. Having caught a bird they confine it in a cage to prevent its escape; yet they take pains that it lives in comfort and plenty to eat and drink, that it is cheerful and joyous. But why do they evince all this

affection to this particular bird ? The trick is to make it the means of decoying other birds into the same snare. Now the device employed by Angra-man as shewn in Vendîdâd XIX, is an exact counterpart of this. Angra-man made all tempting promises to Zoroaster in order that he may get to his fold a large following if only he could secure one such individual as Zoroaster. Thus the allegory teaches that the wicked like Angra-man do not dare go abroad with an open countenance; they wear a mask. Outwardly, sinners are all openness, all sincerity, and kindness but within they are all deception fraud, malice and wickedness.

Our Scriptures tell us that a man succeeds in living a good life in proportion to the good use he makes of such gifts as Ahura-Mazda bestows upon him for a good and happy life; "Man enabled to do the work of purity for (his) soul, by retaining his Creator within himself as a friend. The intelligence and religious feelings and other good qualities which are in man, are means to enable him to form righteous relations. ....And these fully inform man to keep aloof from sin."<sup>1</sup> "He ( Ahura ) endows the spirit of man in this world with the power of perceiving and performing good actions relating to both ( the worlds )."<sup>2</sup> We learn, therefore, from the Zend-Avesta that Ahura-Mazda gives the same gifts, the same faculties, the same dispositions in a greater or smaller degree to all men ; and thereby they are enabled to recognise the truth which is essential to the welfare of the human soul. The same beauty and magnificence in Nature are spread before all eyes. The ordinary truths and the duties of common life are clear as day-light to the high as well as to the low. All men are equal in the eyes of Ahura-Mazda. No man is more favoured by Ahura-Mazda than any other man. "Ahura-Mazda himself is the Beneficent Spirit and is all

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1 D, P, Dk, Vol, ii P, 113.

2 D. P. Dk, Vol. v, P, 328,

powerful in goodness and glory.....He is the Giver unto the soul of the power of beholding both worlds and of doing actions pertaining to both.”<sup>1</sup> So every man receives from Ahura-Mazda all the gifts and aids that are essential to his well-being. : “He ( God ) bestows on man a soul endowed with conscience.....that he may discern what is good and may accomplish good deeds pertaining to both the worlds spiritual and material.....The spiritually good condition of man himself is owing to his pious communion with the Spenta-man of Ahura-Mazda.”<sup>2</sup> Thus we are told that the disparity that exists in the characters of different persons, is not due to the difference in treatment from Ahura or in varying standards of willingness to give and help; but is due to the persons themselves. Of any two men who happen to look at a female countenance one may be carried away with pleasure-seeking excitement, while the other preserves his soul in calmness and chastity; and this from no other cause than the different use each makes of his free-will. The Gâthic Poet confirms this in the following strophe: “Out of the two spirits ( ayâo manivâo vastâ ) one that was evil ( chose evil ) thereby bringing out the worst possible results, but the more bountiful spirit chose righteousness.....”<sup>3</sup> In this quotation we clearly see that the willing-power of man may be under the influence of spenta-man or angraman. Man’s free-will produces acts according to the view which his understanding takes of the matter presented to it. The Gâthic words moreover teach us the great truth that the will is a blind power unable to attach itself to anything unless the understanding guides it. The will having of itself no light must borrow it from the spenta-man which goes before to give it knowledge and to help it to discover what it ought to love or

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 323.  
 2 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 328.

3 Ys, xxx, 5,

hate. Hence all philosophers agree that nothing can be willed unless it is first known. We cannot love anything until we perceive it as good and deserving of love ; just as, on the contrary, we cannot hate a thing or fly from it as bad and deserving of hatred ; and consequently it is necessary that our understanding should be convinced before our will can be inflamed: " Two mental conditions are necessary for a virtuous act ! first, to know by all possible means what act is virtuous, and secondly, to have the love of doing it... ; so that if a person endeavours by all efforts to fulfil these ( conditions ) he gets credit for the virtuous act. If a person knowing act to be virtuous does not endeavour or wish to do it personally as he ought to, he gets no credit for the virtuous act done for him or on his behalf. He ought to do willingly and zealously any act that he knows to be virtuous....." <sup>1</sup>

Ahura-Mazda has given the good understanding-power ( spenta-man ), the willing power and the Injunctions or the Laws through the Daênâ so that the wisher may place his choices.<sup>2</sup> The integrity of the soul consists in adhering to the Truth, the Daênâ, made known to it through the spenta-man by Ahura-Mazda : " O Ahura-Mazda ! he who would turn his mind to that which is better and more holy ( that is, spenta-man ), must pursue the Daênâ in word and deed. His will and wish must be with the chosen creed and in Thy understanding shall he be ( versed ) in many ways."<sup>3</sup> Thus, then, the adherence consists in loving the spenta-man and in acknowledging the Law ( Daênâ ); this adherence is an act of the free affection of the will. When man's will resists the spenta-man for which she was made and adheres to the angra-man—the evil mental power, she becomes corrupted, disordered and rebellious against the Truth or the Law ( Daênâ ) of Ahura-Mazda. Zoroastrianism most forcibly impresses upon us the

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 433.

3 Ys. xlviii, 4.

2 Ys. xxxi, 11.

fact that the purity of the mind is defiled by falsehood and the purity of the will by rebellion against the spenta-man and the Truth or the Law (Daêná). It teaches us that before man there are spenta-man, truth, good and life, and there are also before him angra-man, falsehood, evil and death. Each of these two classes invites and pulls the will towards itself. Whichever of the two he shall choose, shall be given. Like every other power and attribute of the soul the willing power can be perverted to base or ignoble uses and become prolific of evil consequences, whilst its normal exercise is promotive of the greatest good to man.

In fact, according to Zoroastrianism within the precincts of a single human soul there are two principles of volition, the one animated by the spenta-man and the truth presented by it, and the other by the angra-man and its falsehood. There are two principles in a single will. The former is loyal to the Truth or the Law of Ahura and the latter warring against it. Yet in this conflict between the two principles there is no schism. Man's will is one but the objects before it are more than one. Either these objects are good and attract the will to desire, seek and choose them, or they are injurious and have to be renounced and rejected. In short, Zoroastrianism teaches us that man's will is not incapable of willing evil but like every other faculty it is amenable to discipline, it can be controlled by the various means given to man by Ahura-Mazda: "Ragih is produced in every man: he who has Ragih (will-power) in him, invokes Him who is Ahura-Mazda and also invokes him who is Aharman; and when he likes, he follows Ahura-Mazda, the Lord, and when he likes, he goes after Aharman.....For the man who wishes not to perform perverse acts there is much goodness (or happiness), and for him who desires to do perverse acts there is worst evil....."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 385.



" If I have offended Thee whether by thought.....whether by act of will or without intent or wish, I make up the deficiency in praising Thee....." <sup>1</sup> ".....the will of the most laudable pure Creator is like unto that of a worthy person." <sup>2</sup>

So we have seen that the rudder of the vessel in which we are making the voyage of life, is our will, and this no violence of the storms of passions which beset man, can wrest from his grasp. We learn through the allegory in Vendidad XIX, 4—9 that the will to do right, the will to be faithful, the will not to yield to seductions is with the help of Ahura-Mazda within man's power. The chief elements in his good actions are the free judgement and decision of his will and the decision arrived at by his will is through the light of the Law (Daênâ) to do this act or that act: ".....Ponder with your bright enlightened mind. It is for you each individually to decide as to your religion-( Daênâ )" <sup>3</sup> "When first Thou, O Ahura-Mazda.....didst reveal Thy religious laws, Thou didst give us mind and bodily life and besides laws or regulations (Daênâ) whereby we may choose and decide our choices....." <sup>4</sup>

In the Zend-Avesta Daênâ-(Dîn) is derived from the Avestan root dî=to see or to show and signifies the Law of Ahura-Mazda or Religion. It also signifies the Law or the Light of Divinity in the human heart, that is to say, it signifies conscience. Ahura-Mazda has put conscience in every man's soul. A right conscience is the manifestation and application of the Divine Will or Law ( Daênâ ) made known to man. It is the voice of Ahura-Mazda yet it is the voice of reason proclaiming that in a certain case action is right or wrong, allowed or prohibited: "He who deceives the saint, shall be later on utterly destroyed. He shall exist for long duration in darkness; foul shall be his food and low his speech. And this sort of life, O you sinner ! your own (bad)

<sup>1</sup> Ys. 1, 21.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk, Vol, vi, P, 385,

<sup>3</sup> Ys xxx 2.

<sup>4</sup> Ys, xxxi, 11.

fact that the purity of the mind is defiled by falsehood and the purity of the will by rebellion against the spenta-man and the Truth or the Law (Daênâ). It teaches us that before man there are spenta-man, truth, good and life, and there are also before him angra-man, falsehood, evil and death. Each of these two classes invites and pulls the will towards itself. Whichever of the two he shall choose, shall be given. Like every other power and attribute of the soul the willing power can be perverted to base or ignoble uses and become prolific of evil consequences, whilst its normal exercise is promotive of the greatest good to man.

In fact, according to Zoroastrianism within the precincts of a single human soul there are two principles of volition, the one animated by the spenta-man and the truth presented by it, and the other by the angra-man and its falsehood. There are two principles in a single will. The former is loyal to the Truth or the Law of Ahura and the latter warring against it. Yet in this conflict between the two principles there is no schism. Man's will is one but the objects before it are more than one. Either these objects are good and attract the will to desire, seek and choose them, or they are injurious and have to be renounced and rejected. In short, Zoroastrianism teaches us that man's will is not incapable of willing evil but like every other faculty it is amenable to discipline, it can be controlled by the various means given to man by Ahura-Mazda: "Ragih is produced in every man: he who has Ragth (will-power) in him, invokes Him who is Ahura-Mazda and also invokes him who is Aharman; and when he likes, he follows Ahura-Mazda, the Lord, and when he likes, he goes after Aharman.....For the man who wishes not to perform perverse acts there is much goodness (or happiness), and for him who desires to do perverse acts there is worst evil....."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 385.

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<sup>1</sup> Ys. 1, 21.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 385,

<sup>3</sup> Ys. xxx 2.

<sup>4</sup> Ys. xxxi, 11.

conscience through your own actions will bring to you.”<sup>1</sup>  
 “.....Good consciences conquer in the strife against the  
 Daêvas or will conquer or have conquered.”<sup>2</sup> “He whose  
 conscience is the pointer out to him of the higher path.....is  
 the man who has done Ahura’s will.”<sup>3</sup> “The eye of con-  
 science keeps man seeing. And it is by means of its rule that man  
 makes himself worthy. And it is by its rule that strength  
 from the Dâdâr is obtained. Further, it is because of this  
 power (conscience) that man is a holder of the highest strength  
 for driving the Drujas. And as its helper is divine under-  
 standing which instructs in the morality of the good religion.”<sup>4</sup>  
 “Every person has a conscience: and when that conscience  
 remains healthy and uninjured, the conscience is an inter-  
 mediary for an object. And when the reverse, then that  
 thing (conscience) is destroyed, even if an object is.....  
 .....declared highly good......”<sup>5</sup>

Thus, the Zend-Avesta teaches that man has consci-  
 ence and that it points out and makes known what he ought to  
 do under particular circumstances ; it goes on to enjoin and  
 prescribe with such holy and absolute authority that none can  
 challenge it. None but Ahura can issue such an absolute  
 command. He and He alone is the source of such an absolute  
 Law which makes itself heard in the heart of man. Accord-  
 ing to the Zend-Avesta conscience testifies that man has or has  
 not performed a lawful or an unlawful action. It exhorts him  
 to the performance of what is commanded or good and  
 restrains him from doing what is evil. It accuses him of evil  
 done by him intentionally and acquits him of guilt committed  
 in innocence. Conscience, therefore, performs the triple office  
 of witness, advice and judge.

Zoroastrianism makes man sensible of the fact that he  
 who voluntarily violates this inward law ( Daênâ ), will one

1 Ys xxxi. 20.

2 Ys, xxxix, 2.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. i, P. 33.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 269.

5 D. P. Vol. xi, P. 155.

day be called upon to render an account before Ahura-Mazda. Our Religion further teaches that man's conscience not merely pronounces on the morality or immorality of his acts, it is through his conscience that Ahura-Mazda rewards his moral acts and punishes his immoral deeds, not here in this world alone but also after his death in the other world: "To that world, to Hell, you are delivered by your own deeds, by your own conscience, O you sinners."<sup>1</sup> "The souls (of the wicked after death) shall meet those evil men who speak evil and entertain evil consciences, these souls shall have evil food and in hell or in the abode of the lie-demon (Druj) shall be verily their dwelling."<sup>2</sup> "The conscience of the righteous will really crush that of the wicked while his soul rages fiercely on the wide Chinvat Bridge, as he strives by his tongue and by his deeds to reach the path of Asha where the souls of the faithful come."<sup>3</sup>

This teaching of Zoroastrianism about the conscience commands us to be careful in maintaining the purity of conscience ; because it tells us that the approval of conscience is ever so sweet and comforting. It is the spring of joy and cheerfulness in life. It is man's fountain of joy within. Whatever is exterior to man, can confer no true excellence on him. He should nourish his conscience and ward off all that sully its purity. All violation of conscience is according to the Zend-Avesta visited by bitterness, gnawing remorse, pain and misery. He who obeys his conscience, is a good man, and in the end must necessarily be happy. He who disregards its voice, is an evil man and the author of his own misery.<sup>4</sup>

Like every other kindred faculty of man conscience is capable of education, development and improvement. It is originally good and fair but it can be made better and fairer.<sup>5</sup>

1 Vend. v, 62 and 63.

2 Ys xlix, 11,

3 Ys. li, 13,

4 Vend. xix, 29—34 and Yt, xxii,

5 Yt, xxii, 14,

Like any other faculty of the soul it may be perverted by wrong education or bad environment. Hence different persons have different types of conscience. Just as the hand of the pianist acquires a greater delicacy of touch by practice, so conscience when listened to and regularly consulted acquires an extraordinary delicacy. On the other hand, if its dictates are disregarded, its influence grows weaker and weaker till at last its voice is entirely drowned.

All men and women must be in a greater or lesser measure aware of the above mentioned truths ; because conscience is possessed by all men, whether they be learned or unlearned. The following tale, though amusing, strikingly illustrates the power of conscience over even the illiterate and ignorant. An African negro, a man without any education once visited his white neighbour and asked for a little tobacco. A man who was present, offered him a handful of loose tobacco. A day or two after the negro came back and inquired for the donor, declaring that he had found half a dollar in the loose tobacco. He was told by those of whom he inquired that, as it was handed to him by the donor himself, he might retain it and should not trouble himself about the giver. The negro pointed to his breast and in broken English said: "In here me had got a good man and a bad man. The good man says to me: 'It is not yours, you must return it to the owner. The bad man says to me: 'why he gave it and you keep it.' The good man says again: 'Dat not right at all: de tobacco is yours, but not de money.' De bad man says: 'Never mind what de good man speak; you got it go, enjoy yourself. De good man says; 'No, no. You must not do so.' 'So me much trouble, much worry. De good man and de bad man, they kept up such a squabbling between them dat all night me no sleep one wink, no peace."

The whole human race is alive in some way or other to moral distinctions and no nation has existed in any age

that has not acquired a glimpse at least, of the great principles of right and wrong. We find the sense of duty and obligation in every civilised race. It has never been more powerfully expressed than by the Zoroastrian saints of ancient Iran.

The Zoroastrian code of morality has been always and readily accepted by the higher minds. Scholars and philosophers who have studied it, are agreed that the rules of morality in Zoroastrianism are such that though they may be blindly obeyed, even such blind compliance must result in great personal, intellectual, social and spiritual progress.

As we study the lives of our Zoroastrian saints, we see at once that it was by dint of their moral qualities that they could successfully pursue and fulfil the noble aim and object which they had in view; we also see that moral qualities are important in the process of acquiring, utilising and spreading knowledge. And what was the distinguishing trait in Zoroaster's life? Was it not his spotless character? Assign Zoroaster and his disciples what rank you may, it is after all the excellence of their character—their disinterestedness—their devotion to great and good ends—their stainless purity—which constitute the best of their endowments. What was it that endeared Zoroaster and his disciples to Ahura-Mazda and to their fellow-men? Zoroaster and his disciples owed the great love with which they were regarded by Ahura and their fellow-men, to their moral and spiritual integrity, to their unflinching reverence for virtue. To the perfect rectitude of his will and life Zoroaster owed not only his mission on earth but his highest place in Heaven. That Zoroaster's great purpose was to turn men to the path of virtue is what we meet with perpetually in the Gâthâs, and in the Zend-Avesta. What is plainer from the Zend-Avesta than that the practice of virtue is the great purpose of our Zoroastrian Religion and that wherever this is accomplished, the work of Zoroastrianism is done.

According to the Zend-Avesta man's spenta-man and his will-power are the fit soil for virtues to grow and blossom.<sup>1</sup> Man has the light of reason (spenta-man) and the fundamental will or desire for good. These together form the ground of preparation for virtues. Zoroastrianism clearly shows that all virtues lie in the harmony between the spenta-man and the will of man.

No doubt, the other powers of the soul are subject to its will-power and the will acts upon them and puts them in motion. The powers of the soul are moved and decided by the will. The eyes of the understanding are moved, so to say, by the will. The will searches for the truth through these eyes and adheres to the truth when found.<sup>2</sup> Virtue is chiefly the good use of the free will. Our Scriptures commend the just man "who could have transgressed and has not transgressed, could do evil things and has not done them."<sup>3</sup> Thus we see that Zoroastrian holiness (asha) resides primarily in the will of man. Besides, as Zoroastrianism teaches, the intimate relationship between the human will and the Divine Will is indispensably necessary for holiness in man: "Let Thy Will be done."<sup>4</sup>

Zoroastrianism considers the will of man as the seat of free-choice.<sup>5</sup> And the will with its free choice imposes on him personal responsibility. And both these together viz, free will and responsibility, constitute the moral order. Our Religion teaches that man has controlling power over his own character and conduct. He is responsible for his feelings or actions and is rewarded or condemned according as they are good or bad. In a word, it depends on the individual whether he will be good or bad; and this doctrine has been urged in the most forcible manner in the Zend-Avesta.

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1 Ys xxx, 3—6.

2 xxx 3—6, and ys, xxxi, 11.

3 Vend v, 25 and its Commentary.

4 Ys. xxix, 4.

5 xxx, 3—6 and xxxi, 11.



Every virtue is the right and lawful use of the human will ; every vice, likewise, is the wrong and unlawful use of the will. The rule for the right use of the will is the Law (Daênâ) of Ahura-Mazda<sup>1</sup> and this rule directs the human will to the good which is its object. When the will obeys the Daênâ, it is good ; and when it runs counter to the Daênâ, it becomes vicious and leads to evil.

The Will or the Law or the Daênâ, (Dîn) of Ahura-Mazda commands man with Divine authority to reverence Asha ( Righteous Order ) in every act<sup>2</sup> According to the Zend-Avesta that man is blessed who conforms himself to Asha=the Righteous Order=the Principle of Rectitude<sup>3</sup> The chief dictate of Zoroastrianism is to yield up everything in obedience to the Righteous Order or Law of Ahura. It enjoins upon us to dedicate our stateliest monuments in memory of the righteous souls, to preserve and hallow in our hearts the memory of such heroes as Zoroaster, Gustâsp, Jâmâsp, Farshaoshtar, Medyômâh, Hvôvi, Hûtaosa and all other men and women of all ranks and conditions who obeyed, held up and promoted the Best Righteous Order.<sup>4</sup> And hence it is that in our sacred and secular history and literature, in our ceremonies, prayers and festivals, their names and their sacrificial deeds for the cause of Right are kept alive.

We learn from the Zend-Avesta that the idea of Right (Asa) in man is not mere individual personal conviction as to what is good but that it is an idea which he derives from the Divine Inspiration through Nature. All Nature, as it were, plays the role of the preacher of Righteousness ; the heavens and the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the storms, the clouds and every thing in Nature reveal in their orderly disposition the Almighty Power that is pledged to the support of

1 Yt. xxxi, 11 and xlviii 1.

2 Ys xxx, 5.

3 Ys xxx, 9—11.

4 Yt. xliii.

the Righteous Order or Virtue.<sup>1</sup> The Zend-Avesta tells us that through the Righteous Order in the Universe it is made known to man that Rectitude or Righteousness (Asha) is bound up with his own life; that man has not only to admire the Order but has to put the principle of rectitude into practice as his own supreme law. Right (Arshtât), Truth (Mithra), Justice (Rashnu), Obedience (Sraosh)—these according to the Zend-Avesta give man excellence of character and conduct which commands reverence and esteem not only in this world but also in the next.<sup>2</sup> Right, Truth, Justice, and Obedience are ever lasting as they are universal. Man transports these to the Chinvat Bridge. They are the essential elements of Heaven.<sup>3</sup>

Now the questions suggest themselves to us: What faculties does Asha employ? How does Asha come? How is it manifested? Science, as it knows a little of them, cannot answer these questions. It is in our Zoroastrianism however that we find satisfactory solution of these inquiries of the mind. The faculties which Asha employs, are both physical and spiritual; "The acquisition of purity by the soul is through the powers of the body pertaining to this world. It is owing to the purity of the soul that the body pertaining to this world, becomes valuable."<sup>4</sup> "They consider this thus: It is not goodness which is not manifest unto men spiritually and hence also materially."<sup>5</sup>

Now the question: how does Asha come? It comes through the triple formula: humata, hûkhta, hvarshta. Asha (Righteousness) is manifested in good thought, good word and good deed. Thus, Asha which is goodness in thought, word and deed, holds the supreme place alike on earth and in heaven.

1 Ys. xlv. 2—7 and L. 10, etc.

2 Ys. xxxiii, 4—6 and Gâh v, 7—10 and Aogemaide 7—9.

3 S. B. E. Vol. iv, Aogemaide 6—16.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, Ps. 191 and 192

5 D. D. Dk. Vol. xi, P. 97,

"Humata, Hūkhta, Hvarshta"—what a grand and mighty formula this ! It is the most valuable and the most favourite formula of the Zoroastrian Scriptures. It is early launched in the Gāthās, caught up and embraced in the later Avestan books and enthroned in numerous places in our sacred Pahlavi and Pazend writings. It would be too difficult, almost impossible to measure and tell the length, the breadth and the depth of this munificent and multipotent expression. It is an expression for beneficence; in it there is kindness of disposition, kindness of word, kindness of act. It is the principal means for the perfection of man. It is the very antithesis of arrogance, falsehood, disobedience, uncharitableness, spite, revenge, malevolence, slander and the most ruinous feelings, words and deeds made manifest in the oft-recurring expression—Dushmata, Duzhūkhta, Duzhvarshta—which our holy Scriptures frequently and emphatically declare as most dangerous and destructive for man and his happiness in this and in the next world. In our daily important prayer we read as follows: "Vîspa humata, vîspa hūkhta, vîspa hvarshta baothô-varshta, vîspa dushmata, vîspa duzhūkhta, vîspa duzhvarshta nôit baothô-varshta, vîspa humata, vîspa hūkhta vîspa hvarshta vahishtem anghuim ashaêta, vîspa dushmata vîspa duzhūkhta, vîspa duzhvarshta achishtem anghuim ashêta vîspanāmacha humatanām, hūkhtanām, hvarshtanām vahishta anghui âat hacha chithrem = All good thoughts, all good words all good deeds knowingly or voluntarily (and) all evil thoughts, all evil words, all evil deeds done unknowingly or involuntarily ; all good thoughts, all good words, all good deeds bring (a man) into Heaven ; (and) all evil thoughts, evil words, evil deeds, bring (him) into Hell. Thus the end of all good thoughts, good words, good deeds is in Heaven."

If men were to resolve to imbibe the spirit of kindness divinely inculcated in the above-given sacred text and in the delightful triple formula: "Humata, Hūkhta Hvarshta," which

commands us to wish and do all good and no evil, if men were to resolve to make this prayer and this formula an overarching, undergirding and all pervading principle of their life and then carry out this resolution, they would surely be able to say within but a short time: "It seems that the world is getting to be a better place to live in. Life after all is worth living." I say it again: Let men imbibe the spirit of the universally admired holy prayer and the formula. Let men give this spirit full swing and they would have no more need of societies for promoting brotherhood amongst mankind, no more need of societies for prevention of cruelties to animals. The sacred prayer and the formula and the spirit implanted in them will alone be sufficient to settle a thousand questions. It will change the phase of everything. It will mellow through and through their entire nature.

Humata, Hūkhta, Hvarshta=kindness ; the formula preaches kindness to all ; kindness to the young and the old ; kindness to superiors and inferiors ; kindness to masters and servants ; kindness to friends and enemies ; kindness to men and animals. Be kind, morning, noon and night, and the effect of such kindness or goodness will be written deep on your soul and on your conscience. It will impart beauty to your body and soul.<sup>1</sup> Kindness is the most magnificent chisel to shape man's countenance and conscience.

Humata, Hūkhta, Hvarshta: This formula teaches us in the first place the universal law that thought must clothe itself in words. Grand and lofty thoughts or conceptions create for themselves a good and worthy vestment. And on the good words, good deeds follow. If on harking back we find our life strewn all with good words as never came to good deeds or with good thoughts as never produced good words or actions, we feel as unsatisfied and unhappy as though our life

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<sup>1</sup> Vend xix, 29—32 and yt xxii.

had been one full of failures and disappointments. Men meet with dissatisfaction and disappointment in life who are either men of words but not of deeds: or men of deeds but not of words; or who think and resolve without acting; or who act without thinking or resolving.

According to the sacred formula aforesaid, it is not by the multiplicity of things that we do, that we acquire perfection but by the perfection and purity of intention with which we do them. The Zoroastrian is required to cherish always a spirit of benevolence, to think always the best of thoughts. A good thought inclines man to charitable views: to believe good even of bad things and of bad men. Good mind searches for the good: vulgar mind for the evil.<sup>1</sup> A saying tells us: "Flies find out sores and bees flowers."

The triple formula moreover enjoins man always to utter good words. Surely, as we all know, good words have the most wonderful power and influence in this world of ours. No chemical combinations that we know of, are like them in producing effects. Good words smooth dissension, sweeten conversation, make superiors amiable and inferiors acceptable and thus they promote harmony, love, peace and prosperity amongst men, societies and communities. No doubt, our good words so often die away in their own echoes and have no results to show. But this is only when good words lack the support of good intentions and therefore good deeds never can come out of them.

The triple formula teaches also that words are of value only when they give expression to the reality which lies behind them, that is, we should not merely delight in good words but also in good deed and in truth. It teaches that true charity is that which inspires us to something more than outward demonstration of love. According to the Text of our Scriptures it is not enough that man should think good

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<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxxii, 10—13.

thoughts and speak good words but he must so endeavour that his good thoughts and good words become practically efficacious. For action is the true test or trial of virtue. So doth Zoroastrianism require us to bring into full and simultaneous play all that is good in thought, word and deed. The object of all training and education, whether by the family or the school or the university, ought to be to bring this triple union to its best fulfilment.

Our Scriptures further tell us that our actions lack merit if they be not for a good end.<sup>1</sup> As in building that we raise, we lay no stone without applying the rule and the plumb, so in every action that we do, we ought to apply the unerring rule of the Will of Ahura-Mazda:—“Thy will be done.”<sup>2</sup> Naturalists relate that when the eagle desires to ascertain whether her young ones are legitimate or otherwise, she takes them in her talons and holding them suspended in the air, exposes them to the brightest beams of the sun; if they look steadily towards the sun, she judges them to be legitimate, and so carries them back to her nest and feeds them as her own; but if their eyes twinkle, she looks upon them as illegitimate and lets them fall to the ground. In a like manner he is easily known to be the faithful creature of Ahura-Mazda who fixes his eyes upon Him and refers all his actions to Him and have no other object at heart than to abide by His will or Law.

Actions performed after the manner aforesaid are deemed by the Zoroastrian saints as full and perfect; and verily those who have performed them, have lived a full and entire life. For, the Zend-Avesta tells us that before Ahura no years of our life are reckoned but those of good actions. We reckoned at this rate that day only as one of our life which we have devoted to good actions i. e. actions pleasing to Ahura-Mazda. Only when our actions have been good, full

<sup>1</sup> Ys. xlviii, 14,

<sup>2</sup> Ys. xxix, 4; xxxi, 16 and 22;  
Ys. xliii, 4.

and complete after the manner aforesaid, that we may be said to have lived a great while in a short time and to have merited much in the eyes of Ahura.

Our Scriptures enjoin us not merely to avoid evil thoughts ( dushmata ) evil words (duzhûkhta) and evil deeds (duzhvarshta) but to do that positive good which we all are under obligation to perform, that is, to think, speak and do all good. To leave undone the good which is required of us by the famous triple formula and our sacred prayer mentioned above, is equivalent actually to the doing of evil. Dante has been reproached for including within the upper circle of his Hell numberless souls whose life on earth had been free from evil and yet barren of good. But he did no more than give expression to a truth which Zoroastrianism preached so vigorously. Hence it is that few things in the whole of our Zend-Avesta are so earnestly recommended or so often inculcated upon us as charity. This shows how much it is desirable that charity should take deep root in our hearts. It is upon this commandment for charity embodied in the triple formula: Humata, Hûkhta, Hvarshta—that the whole edifice of love and the bond of union rests. Nothing indeed is more necessary for humanity than the fulfilment of this commandment. What community, what society can ever be formed or be able to subsist without the charity urged by it? Take away this charity and the consequent bond of union from the affair of any assembly whatsoever and it will present nothing but discord and confusion. The chief means conducive to the material and spiritual advancement of human society is that spirit of charity and union which has been so beautifully expressed in our daily important prayer of Vîspa Humata. He who bears well and deep in his mind its sacred words and their meaning, and acts according to the commandment in the prayer, lives and lives in peace with his Creator, Ahura-Mazda with his fellow men and with his own self,

We learn from the Zend-Avesta that there is a struggle in the heart of man between the spenta-man and the angra-man i. e. between good and evil : between his inclination to conform with the Best Righteous Order (Asha-vahishta) and his inclination to oppose that Divine Order which should meet with his compliance and regulate all his acts. Balanced as man is between these two inclinations he needs strength which we know by the illustrious word love, embodied as it is in our most sublime triple formula ; Humata, Hûkhta, Hvarshta.

Zoroastrian charity is the love of one's own self, of fellow-man and of Ahura-Mazda : " Be it known that the man that is most virtuous, is brought into relation with the Creator by knowing himself by means of the knowledge of the good religion and by the love chiefly of his own soul ; by not loving himself he does injury and by injuring himself the Almighty is displeased, and by the displeasure of the Almighty the relationship of God in him ceases and by the cessation of the relationship with God he destroys the protection which the Deity exercises over him. ....Again the knowledge of oneself is attainable from the good religion and by knowing self there is love for self ; .....by not injuring oneself there is no displeasure to the Almighty and by gratifying God one attains to close relationship with God and by the close relationship there is protection from God and from such protection man attains to both kinds of excellence, of this world and of that."<sup>1</sup> Ahura-Mazda has implanted in man, as we have already seen, the instincts of self-preservation and self-promotion through fravashi and the spenta-man and the free will. Self-love is therefore the necessary and natural product of these three God-given gifts. But Zoroastrianism demands that man's self-love should be subordinated to the love of Ahura-Mazda and of his fellow-men. False egotism is the fundamental vice of

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 356.



human nature. According to the Zend-Avesta unrestrained egotism or self-love is the enemy of true brotherly charity. The Daênâ of Ahura-Mazda, no doubt, illumines the understanding and strengthens the will of man to control his lower passions and withstand the seductions of the world. But instead of withdrawing him from his natural course and from his fellow-men it bestows on him joy and inspires him with love for humanity and cultivates that spirit of benevolence and charity which has conferred countless benefits on the human race.

To one bred to Zoroastrian ideals nothing is more obnoxious than certain practices of Hindooism and Sophism which enjoin abnormal physical and mental conditions such as ecstasy, asceticism, celibacy and fasting: "Let him who desires goods, have them given to him; let him who desires a wife, receive and marry her; let him who desires knowledge, be taught the Mâthras....." "The man who has a wife, is far above him who lives in celibacy; he who keeps a house, is far above him who has none; he who has children, is far above the childless man; he who has riches, is far above him who has none;....." "He who eats meat has in him Vohuman much better than he who does not do so; the latter is all but dead....."<sup>1</sup> "That place is most happy on which one of the faithful builds a house with a priest in it, with cattle, with a wife and children and good herds and in which the cattle, virtue, the dog, the wife and the child continue to thrive."<sup>2</sup> Life regulated under the conditions prescribed in above quotations bespeaks an existence with love or social enjoyment and such life has been recommended and encouraged by Zoroastrianism. The Zoroastrian has been taught by his Religion, as we shall see later on, to regard the love of wife, children, kinsmen, friends, countrymen and fellow-men as among the purest and holiest emotions of the human soul.

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<sup>1</sup> Vend. iv, 44-48.

<sup>2</sup> Vend. iii, 2 and 3.

The staunch Zoroastrian is not like the Buddhist or the Brahmin whose life is chiefly characterised by egotism. The Buddhist as well as the Brahmin begins his preparations for Nirvâna by crushing out every impulse of human affection and every attachment to social or domestic life, retaining nothing of an emotional character save his own monumental egoism.

It is the Zoroastrian Religion that has taught man in the most convincing way what a love it is that Ahura-Mazda bears to man and what a love it is that man should bear to his fellow-men. Man must love his fellow-men and be charitable towards them : "Ushtëhmât yahmât ushtë kahmâtchît=Happiness to him from whom happiness is to others."<sup>1</sup> Here Zoroastrianism supplies a very beautiful definition of charity. The numerous educational institutions, libraries, laboratories, dispensaries, hospitals, orphanages, dharmasalas, asylums etc. which Parsis have endowed in this country and elsewhere for the benefits of Zoroastrians and non-Zoroastrians, bear mute but eloquent testimony to the broadness of the Zoroastrian idea of charity. Zoroastrianism makes no distinctions of caste or creed in its idea of charity. It is this ideal which has made catholic charity deeply embedded in the hearts of Zoroastrians. "The pure philanthropists are those who do good to their fellow-subjects through love."<sup>2</sup> Such catholic spirit Zoroastrianism preaches that it says : "He who is a Jew, is not a wicked man owing to his being called a Jew, nor (are) people of other evil religions (wicked) owing to their being known as of evil religions."<sup>3</sup> "He who relieves the poor, makes Ahura, King."<sup>4</sup> "The Zoroastrians should protect the defenceless women and children, who owing to old age or their inability to move about.....seek their assistance."<sup>5</sup> "For remedying diseases and pestilence orders should be given for erecting in cities and towns hospitals.....And measures of all kinds should be

<sup>1</sup> Ys xxi, 3.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 453.

<sup>3</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, P. 31.

<sup>4</sup> S. B. E Vol iv, Frag P. 251.

<sup>5</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. i, P. 41.

taken in cities whereby the city may flourish,"<sup>1</sup> Thus the philanthropic spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion shows itself not merely in sentiments but in the deeds of its followers in their universal charity.

But what is it that according to the Zoroastrian idea constitutes the noblest type of benevolence? why, it consists in teaching mankind the truths about Ahura-Mazda and man, in disseminating virtuous ideas in man and in elevating the intellectual and moral level of society: "If men of the same faith, friends and brothers, agree together that one may obtain from the other either goods, a wife or knowledge,..... let him who desires knowledge be taught the holy Word..... so that he may increase in intelligence and grow strong in holiness....."<sup>2</sup> ".....If a person be able in respect of wealth and learning to impart instruction in the wisdom pertaining to the good religion, then that person, having the power of learning and wealth, ought to give zealous assistance in respect of wisdom and wealth to those not fully able; so that an enabler may become.....an acquirer of reward in both the worlds and the world may thence become improved, mended and beautified."<sup>3</sup> "The wisdom by which he (man) understands about the desire of the heavenly angels.....is the true pure religion which is knowledge of the spirits, the science of sciences, the teacher of the teaching of angels and the source of all knowledge."<sup>4</sup> "As to him who remains in the good religion of the Mazda-worshippers, who saves men from a foreign faith and irreligion and then holds back some of those who have the idea that they should go over to a foreign faith and irreligion and they do not go over to the foreign faith but become steadfast in the religion of the Mazda-worshippers, the nature of the good work of such a saintly man and the nature of the decision of the angels

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1 *ibid.*

2 *Vend.* iv, 44 and 45

3 *D. P. Dk.* Vol. 1, P. 38,

4 *Dd.* iv, 3,

(yazatas) about him is very grand and high. He is much extolled, exalted, of great good works and abundant recompense and the path to the best existence (Behesht,) prepared by his righteousness is wide, the delight of his soul becomes complete and its hope is great. And every good work that is manifested in the good religion by those who are transferred by him from a foreign faith and irreligion and which they shall do thereafter,.....they are saved from irreligion.....becomes his as much as though it had been set going by him himself and he has the same praise and the same good works with them.....Then his position in righteousness is very grand and in the world he has himself great eminence, applause and dignity.”<sup>1</sup>

Charity is the soul and life of Zoroastrianism. The force and wisdom of our Religion are comprised in the prominence which it gives to love in man for man and his Creator. As I have said in the last chapter on God; “there are two things in man by which he is able to adhere to God, Ahura-Mazda, viz, by his mind and his will. This adhesion is chiefly through love. The love is the most powerful way of adhering to Ahura-Mazda and hence the whole intent and end of the Divine Law, the Daênâ (Dîn) is to make man good.” But a man is good when his thoughts, words and deeds are good. And when they are good, man reaches the Highest Good, Spenishta or Spentôtêmô(=Ahura-Mazda). Ahura-Mazda is charity or benevolence (spentôtêmô). Benevolence is the life and perfection of His Being. He is the essential charity. Of all the attributes of Ahura-Mazda, charity is the most noble and all-embracing. So does the Zoroastrian saint offer Ahura-Mazda through love of Him even his own self, his whole body and soul.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, then, we have seen that Zoroastrian charity is the love of Ahura, of fellow-men and one's self. These three

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1 Dd. xli, 1-5.

2 Ys. xxxiii, 14,

kinds of love combined together, each in its proper measure, make up the charity. Such charity alone renders life truly spiritual life and the want of it causes vice and corruption.

In the order of excellence and holy operation, charity i. e. goodness is the first, giving complete form to all the virtues and exerting its sweet influence over them all. It is the sovereign virtue to which all other virtues are subservient and under whose rule and influence every virtue rises in power. Among the virtues that fit us for our final end and that carry us straightway to Ahura, charity (râitis) comes foremost.

But it is impossible to imagine the Righteous Order (Asha) in any man without Sraosha (Obedience). Sraosha constitutes the very essence of Zoroastrian virtue. Obedience prepares the way for Asha. Obedience is the first condition of Asha.

We learn from the Zend-Avesta that there are two kinds of pious obedience. The first is the loving obedience due to Ahura-Mazda and to His Daêna. To obey the Will of Ahura revealed through the Daêna—to form ourselves after the purest ideal of Goodness (Spentô-temô) which the Daêna (Dîn) and Nature present to us as a pattern, is the great work of man's earthly existence. "Let Thy Will be done."<sup>1</sup> This is a very short sentence but very comprehensive, expressive and worthy of all commendation. It tells us that the first rule of a true Zoroastrian should be to regulate his will according to the Will of Ahura-Mazda. By obedience to the Will does a man accept the Divine Wisdom and the Divine Justice to make his own will just and right: "Indeed, I will declare what the Most Bountiful One told me, that Mathra, that Word (that Daêna or Dîn) which is for men the best to accept. Those men who will pay obedient attention to me (my Dîn), upon them shall come Weal and Immortality....."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxix, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ys. xlv, 5.

There is also a second kind of loving obedience and that obedience is due to every recognised mundane authority: to family, society, community and country. In primitive Iran there was not a house, village, city, country or an empire that was without temporal and spiritual heads. As in civil government all obeyed their king and governors, so in ecclesiastical government they obeyed their bishops and arch-bishops (Zarathushtra or Zarathushtrôtemô): "..... (O Ahura-Mazda)! clearly reveal a leader (who would guide us in regard) to both lives. Then let (our) obedience (sraosha) draw near (that leader)....."<sup>1</sup> "I will incite, I who am Zarathushtra, the heads of the houses, villages, towns and provinces, to the attentive obedience to this Law (Daêna) which is of Ahura and according to Zarathushtra, in their thoughts, their words and deeds."<sup>2</sup> "Leadership is a virtue but the opposit is anarchy."<sup>3</sup> ".....A good king is the Sraoshârâi of this world: hence the obedience of the Sraoshârâi means the execution of the Divine Commandment."<sup>4</sup> Hence in all the Afrîngân ceremonies the Zoroastrian priest has to say certain prayers in which he expresses his loyalty to the ruling sovereign of his country and his good wishes for him. It is the recital of these daily prayers that engender in a Zoroastrian great regard and affection for his king.

We are enjoined by our Religion to consider the holy Sraosha as our constant companion, guide, guardian and protector in this world as well as in the next; to remember the Yazata Sraosha in our daily prayers and in connection with every rite and ceremony performed for the dead or the living and in this manner to keep constantly before our mind the excellent virtue of obedience. Thus, then, our ancient Zoroastrian saints chose Sraosha as the guide for themselves and for all and taught men that the foundation of moral perfection in a

1 Ys. xlv, 16.  
2 Ys. viii, 7.

3 D. D. Dk Vol. xiv, P, 42.  
4 D. D. Dk, Vol. xiii, 16.

creature does not lie in austerity and mortification of the body, nor in continual labour, nor in profound learning nor in great talents but in perfect obedience to every recognised authority in the religious, domestic, social and political spheres. So, whatever be the state of our life, place, quality and function, whether it be rich or poor, ecclesiastic or secular, whether we are ruler or subject, teacher or disciple, priest or student, let us keep ourselves in obedience to all such authorities as are promotive of our temporal as well as spiritual welfare; especially let us keep our understanding, our will and along with them our body in obedience to the Law (Daênâ) or Order (Asha) of Ahura-Mazda. We cannot think how much trouble, uneasiness, anxiety, disputing and quarreling this obedience will save us: "I, who am seeking Thy Obedience (Saraosh) the greatest of all help, the greatest source of long life within Thy Kingdom of Thy 'Good Mind and leading to the straight paths of Righteous Order in which Ahura-Mazda dwells.'" <sup>1</sup>

It only requires a little knowledge of what is going on in this world around us to see that the prosperity of whole nations and communities and likewise of our own community is gravely threatened by the growth and spread of materialistic selfishness. Such selfishness is everywhere the outcome of disobedience and neglect of the laws of religion. That this is so, has been very clearly perceived by distinguished men like Sir James Stephen in the last generation and the late President Roosevelt of the United States in our own. They have publicly and emphatically declared their firm conviction that neglect of the laws of a good religion leads to unchecked selfishness in man and brings in the long run moral and material ruin of the people among whom it prevails. If, then, we are concerned for the true welfare of our community and country, we cannot do better than cultivate a genuine zeal for

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<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxxii, 5.

obedience to the Daênâ or the Law of Ahura and for the maintenance of His Righteous Order (Asha) within man.

There is no state of life wherein subordination or obedience is not absolutely necessary. As in ancient Iran, so in our own country we see that people obey their governors, commissioners, collectors and their assistants and all governors, commissioners collectors and their assistants obey their kings and emperors. In like manner in spiritual matters all people obey their clegymen and the clergymen obey their bishops and the bishops their archbishops. The greatest army submits to the authority of one general. Only one captain commands a man-of-war or a ship. Even amongst irrational creatures bees have their king and cranes in their fight have always one to head them. What more shall we say: do not the heavens take their motion from the primum mobile ?

Romulus to build Rome slew his brother and founded the city in blood to show in his own cruel manner that two kings were impossible in one kingdom. The scholars of Pythagoras, the Greek philosopher, had so much respect for him that his bare authority was considered a sufficient reason to silence all controversies amongst themselves by: "He said it." Eusebius, the historian, tells us of a law amongst the Lacedemonians, which forbade all young people to meddle with the government of the commonwealth or to examine whether their laws were good or bad.

Certainly, the truly obedient always loves to obey the good laws of his religion, of his house, society and country. Wise men all agree that the soul enjoys peace when its irregular passions and irregular appetites are suppressed or repressed by means of the obedience due to such laws. Man should love obedience in order to enjoy peace. For obedience and peace are friends so linked together that if man does not love obedience, peace will not love him. In Ysna LX, 5, the Zoroastrian



priest plays : " May obedience (srasha) triumph in this house or family over disobedience (asrushtīm), peace (âkhshtis) over discord (anâkhshtīm), charity (râitis) over avarice (arâitīm-humility (ârmaitis) over pride (tar ômaitīm) truth (arsh-ukhdha-vâx) over falsehood (mith-aokhtem vâchem)." In this quotation we find âkhshti mentioned immediately after sraosha. By âkhshti (Pah. âshti ; Pâz âtashi) is meant peace, friendship, harmony and union of hearts. The multitude of believers in a religion have but one heart and one soul if only they obey one Religion ( Daëna or Dîn ).

Amongst the ancient Egyptians the hieroglyphic of union was a lire ; for the instrument produces harmony only when the rest of its strings accorded with the first, and discord when they disagreed. In like manner in a community when all agree upon religious matters, there reigns harmony and peace ; whereas if they disagree, they disturb the harmony of the whole union. The first and greatest obstacle which man encounters in seeking and enjoying this inward peace lies in the spirit of disobedience, arrogance, falsehood, uncharitableness; and it is this spirit which is the cause of all apostasies, heresies, immorality and ruin. And hence the saint says: "I will abjure from Thee all disobedience, will abjure the evil mind, the mind that is not good or uncharitable, will abjure arrogance towards my kinsmen, lying before my coworkers and contempt towards my inferiors....." <sup>1</sup>

In contrast to arrogance or pride and contempt stands the virtue of humility. Humility is the foundation of righteousness, the foundation and preservation of all spiritual strength : ".....I pray through my righteousness, the best mind and humility (through these virtues) for that mighty Kingdom, by whose force we might destroy the Demon of Lie." <sup>2</sup> " O Thou, Ahura (awake) arise and give me strength

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1 Ys, xxxiii. 1.

2 Ys, xxxi. 4.

through humility.....”<sup>1</sup> “.....O Thou Spenta Armaiti! ( Bountiful Humility ) show forth or teach through righteousness the truths of ( our ) Religion.”<sup>2</sup> “.....A good and wise man.....knows the bountiful Armaiti ( Humility ) as the creatrix of righteous beings.”<sup>3</sup>

Humility is the virtue which leads man to make a just estimate of himself as he is in reality:—“Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through any happiness of the world ; for the happiness of the world is such like a cloud that comes on a rainy day, which one does not ward off by any hill. “Thou shouldst not be too much arranging the world ; for the world arranging man becomes spirit destroying. “Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through much treasure and wealth : for in the end it is necessary for thee to leave all. “Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through respect and reverence ; for respectfulness does not assist in the spiritual existence. “Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through great connections and race ; for in the end thy trust is on thy own deeds. “Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through life ; for death comes upon thee at last.”<sup>4</sup> Zoroastrian humility enjoins us to feel and express in every possible way our absolute dependence in all things on Ahura-Mazda. The afore-said religious belief is indeed a just expression on our part of our nature, position and dependence as the subjects of Ahura-Mazda.

In the school of Zoroastrianism we learn the lesson of true humility. True humility is according to the Zend-Avesta voluntary perfect subjection of our whole being to Ahura : “To Thy good Realm may we approach for ever ; and a good King be Thou over us. ....So, mayst Thou lay hold on us to help.....Thy praisers and Māthra-speakers may we be called O Ahura-Mazda.....”<sup>5</sup> “From humility ( ārmaiti )

1 Ys. xxxii, 12.

2 Ys. xxxiii, 13

3 Ys, xxxiv, 10.

4 Minoi Khurad II, 98—110.

5 Ys. xl. 2—5.

arises the recognition of God and from that recognition spiritual belief and from that spiritual belief friendship of the soul and from that friendship righteous actions and through such actions the soul is redeemed "1 " In the conduct of man this thing is excellent when he regards his inferior as his equal and his equal as his superior and his superior as his master."2

What is man in so far as the Universe is concerned ? In the order of nature, in almost every respect, he is a mere nonentity. This is what our religious custom teaches us. It enjoins us when on a visit to a Fire-Temple to apply some ash from the fire-altar to our foreheads saying : " Remember, O Man ! that thou art dust and to dust thou shalt return." We always observe this custom before our sacred Fire and even before our hearth because we consider the fire as an emblem of Ahura-Mazda, God, who is the source of all light and knowledge. From the profound reverential awe with which we are inspired by the sacred Fire, our true humility springs, whilst our souls are led to the loving contemplation of the Divine Majesty, Greatness, Wisdom and Benevolence and of our littleness, ignorance, poverty and want.

The humility preached by Zoroaster and his disciples does not imply a spiritless attitude but rather an attitude of courage and decision. It does not forbid us to assume our rightful place in the world or to disregard the demands which our station in life makes of necessity upon us. Even Zoroaster and his disciples and followers maintained the dignity of their position. But in regard to this they were actuated by pure motives. In all their thoughts, words and deeds they avoided everything that intended to nourish pride and vanity within themselves. They did not attach themselves to a good cause for the sake of enhancing their own fame, reputation or popularity but simply for supporting and upholding the good

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1 D. D. Dk, Vol, xii, P. 65.

2 D. D. Dk, Vol, x, P. 11.

Cause, the good Law, the good Will of Ahura-Mazda. Ahura-Mazda, as we read in some of the passages of the Zend-Avesta, gave them ample gifts and rewards for their humility.

Spenta-ârmaiti, spendomad or sapandârmad signifies in the Zend-Avesta, "Bountiful humility" and "bountiful earth." The virtue of humility may be well compared with the all-receiving, all-fertilising mother earth which is subject to the heavens, is opened by the labour and toil of lowly men, is softened by the rain of heavens, refreshed with the dews, warmed by the sun and becomes through these influences the nourishing mother of every plant that Ahura has planted. Hence it is that humility and that mother earth are called by one and the same name.

About truth, right or rectitude I have already spoken in the beginning of the subject of Zoroastrian morality. So what I need say here is that the Zend-Avesta in quite a number of its pages proclaims that the foundation of mental and moral perfection is truth. It proclaims that knowledge and truth are the objects of intelligence. It is the function of the intelligence to seek, acquire and retain them. It is the truths that constitute the perfection and beautitude of the intelligence. Hence for the holy is vahishtem-manô=the best mind, the mind with the best knowledge, the mind filled with perfect truths through such knowledge.<sup>1</sup> The highest faculty of man, that which according to the Zend-Avesta reigns over all the rest, is man's intelligence of which the proper aim is truth, the mind conceiving the things that it considers as in reality they are: "The function of intelligence is to search out truths, the function of understanding is to adopt and treasure up the truth and the function of wisdom is to discriminate good and evil."<sup>2</sup> "By truthfulness and true-speaking in accordance with wisdom gloriousness is increased and

<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxx, 4.

<sup>2</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. x, P. 17.

thereby the progress of mankind takes place."<sup>1</sup> "If at any place holy men should find untruth very convenient and beneficial, still it must never at any time be spoken. There is an admonition in the good religion about truthful persons that if owing to true information being given by a truthful person, he should injure holy men, still not looking to that, he should be praised for his truth-speaking. And similarly if at any time by telling an untruth his false information should do a benefit to holy men, still he should be despised for his falsehood."<sup>2</sup> "It is necessary to take early to the speaking of truth and doing of justice, and to maintain oneself therein, for nothing whatever is better among mankind than truth. Owing to truth Hormazd created this world and that world. It is requisite to occasion the resurrection owing to truth; and, as to every place where truth is not taken up, the glory in that place has found a way out. It is said in Revelation that one truthful man is better than a whole world speaking falsehood. The accursed Aharman when he perceived the spirit of truth, had fallen senseless three thousand years. From fear of truth he never managed to hold up his head, and from fear of truth he did not manage to come into this world....."<sup>3</sup> "The greatness of the Iranians is owing to truthfulness in all matters."<sup>4</sup> "The source of immorality is false knowledge and of false knowledge is the wrong wit of angra-man."<sup>5</sup> "Man does evil owing to the wrong knowledge of the evil-minded, (angra-man). That which is of false knowledge is immoral and by such knowledge man does evil. And its result is a miserable existence....."<sup>6</sup>

If the conception of the mind be not in accordance with the nature of that which it conceives, there is ignorance; for knowledge is the apprehension of truth. Yet not all want of knowledge is ignorance properly speaking, for we are not

<sup>1</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, P. 69.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. i, P. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Saddar lxii, 1-7.

<sup>4</sup> D P Dk. Vol ix, P. 600.

<sup>5</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vii P 442,

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, P. 443,

supposed to and cannot know all things. But that truly is ignorance when the knowledge of something is lacking to one who could and ought to have known it.

We see in the Zend-Avesta that over and over again our Prophet and Zoroastrian saints prayed to be enlightened and delivered from ignorance—identifying ignorance with sin and placing knowledge on a par with virtue or piety: “Where are Thy adorers, O Mazda ! who enlightened by Thy Good Mind, may deliver the doctrines with sufficient mental light as real treasures.”<sup>1</sup> “O Ahura-Mazda ! perfectly satisfy and fill up the desire of those whom Thou hast known as enlightened and approached by Thy Good Mind on account of their righteousness ; for I have known Thy instructions (sравâo) to be sublime, full of glory (or victory) and therefore most worthy objects of desire.”<sup>2</sup> “That great satisfaction, that deciding joy which Thou didst grant to the two battling parties,.....  
.....O Mazda ! grant us and declare by the word or tongue of Thy mouth that vow which is for the seeing so that we may know it and make all men believers.”<sup>3</sup> From these Gâthic stanzas we learn that the intelligence after receiving the light of truth reposes, rejoices, exults and is happy according to the nature of the vision that enlightens and fills it. Hence it is that in Ys. LX, 5 we see the holy saint invoking in his prayers repose or peace (âkhshti) with truth and other virtues.

Ahura-Mazda wishes that man should know Him and his Creation. For this reason the person who has the ability to give men knowledge about God is called in the good religion a chief and excellent adviser. On him who teaches Divine Wisdom to men, Ahura-Mazda bestows for this purpose the strength of knowledge.<sup>4</sup> It is the learned or enlightened that live and become immortal. They know how to discern things and hence comprehend all things that have been and will be.<sup>5</sup> “Know-

1 Ys. xxxiv, 7.

2 Ys. xxviii, 10 or 11.

3 Ys. xxxi, 3.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, Ps 444 445.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, Ps. 401, and 402  
and D. D. Dk. Vol. xii. P. 41.

ledge is the abode of goodness and goodness the embodiment of wisdom and wisdom the promoter of the world. From good knowledge arises good wisdom and from good wisdom arises good disposition and from good disposition good nature and from good nature arise righteous actions and by such actions the evil principle ( Druj or Angra-man ) is dispelled from the world. Self-exertion for meritorious actions and abstinence of sin are through knowledge.”<sup>1</sup> “ It is well known that as much more men know, so much more ably civilised they are.”<sup>2</sup> “ Men ought to raise themselves to illustrious position by education and worldly knowledge.”<sup>3</sup> “ It is the duty of every man to know these things at least and whoever does not know them, is an immoral man: ‘ What am I ? Am I a man or a devil ? Whence have I come ? On what am I to rely ? whom am I to follow ? Whither shall I return ? ’ ”<sup>4</sup> “ The object and the advantage of knowledge are the reigning of Vohuman or spenta-man in the body ( of man ) and the developing the world in righteousness.”<sup>5</sup> Thus according to Zoroastrianism knowledge and piety, ignorance and vice, go together : “ There is no piety without knowledge. “ It is ignorance that ruins most people, those ill-informed ; both amongst those who have died and those who shall die.”<sup>6</sup>

The highest aim of man is perfect happiness.<sup>7</sup> And nothing can make man truly happy but his perfection.<sup>8</sup> And the very idea of perfection is that the whole nature of a being is unfolded and developed in due proportion so that the highest and the worthiest powers will hold ascendancy and all others by acting in their true spheres will fulfil the end for which they are given. Such proportionate development constitutes the health and beauty of the body and such proportionate develop-

1 D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, Ps. 64 and 73  
and Vol. xiii, P. 12.

2 D. D. Dk. Vol. xi, 79.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, P. 585.

4 D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, P. 13

5 Dk. bk. ix, xlii, 20.

6 S. B. E. Vol. iv, Fragment Ps. 347  
and 379.

7 Ys. xxxiii, 10.

8 xlii, 8.

ment constitutes the health and beauty of the soul and its faculties. The perfection of the soul consists in well-proportioned activity of all its faculties proportionately developed, purified and elevated through knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

All Saoshyants were enlightened saints, possessors and revealers of truths, natural and spiritual. It was such men of perfect knowledge and piety who proved themselves the great reformers or improvers of the world and promoted its progress. And such will be the saints who will bring about the final change and renovation of the world : " When shall the Saoshyants with their perfect mind or intelligence come to further the spiritual welfare of the world....." <sup>2</sup> " When shall the men of mental perfection come and when shall they drive from hence the destruction caused by drunkenness....." <sup>3</sup> ".....  
...Let the enlightened speak to the enlightened. Let not the ignorant deceive us. Do Thou, O Ahura-Mazda ! declare to us the sure signs of Thy Good Mind." <sup>4</sup> " To the enlightened man does the Beneficent Giver of gifts, the Omniscient Lord, proclaim the best of His teachings, His secret sayings through his righteousness. The one endowed with the thoughts of Thy Good Mind's understanding can be like Thee." <sup>5</sup>

In the Zend-Avesta, chiefly in the Gâthâs, Ahura-Mazda has been represented as for ever desiring, for ever trying to give knowledge to the faithful. He is described as always ready to make men understand Himself, His rational creature and His Universe ; always hovering, as it were, about man's mind with an unbroken presence. No doubt, true knowledge is according to our Scripture a precious possession but it bids us remember that he who seeks it, must first be purified of passions, since none but the pure soul can apprehend that which is true knowledge. The more a man is holy, the more

1 Ys. lx, 11 and xxx, 4.

2 Ys. xlv, 8

3 Ys. xlviii, 10

4 Ys. xxxi, 17.

5 Ys. xlviii 3.



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doth Divine Wisdom come to him, not given as a reward but simply admitted into a nature grown more capable of receiving it : " For the holy is the best mind." <sup>1</sup> " To the discerning and the wise are these ( spiritual ) matters clear. Such men follow through their good mind and power the Righteous Order in words as well as in actions. And to Thee they prove themselves vigorous helpers." <sup>2</sup> " .....Between the two spirits ( spenta-man and angra-man ) the wise choose aright, but not so the evil-doers." <sup>3</sup> " .....Our thoughts will be inclined towards the place where true wisdom dwells as in her home." <sup>4</sup>

Wisdom ( khratu, kharat or kharad ) is represented in the Zend-Avesta as an attribute of Ahura-Mazda. It is coeternal with Him. It reigns as one especially honoured in the palace of the Supreme King, Ahura-Mazda of Heaven. It assists Him in His creation and in the government of all His creatures. Wherever man goes, the Divine Wisdom follows him ; it meets him everywhere and surrounds him with instructions. It shines in the sun and the moon ; it radiates the heavens ; it whispers through all sounds of nature. It comes forth from the characters of good and wise men. Wisdom is a pure, bright, everlasting stream flowing from Ahura-Mazda and reflecting His operations and goodness. It guides man to perfection and happiness. <sup>5</sup>

Wisdom is also represented in our Scriptures as an impersonal and abstract idea or quality, a created thing. It proceeds from Ahura and is poured out upon all His works. The created wisdom is bidden by Ahura to make her dwelling in all good men. In man there is the innate wisdom ( âsna-khratu ) and there is the acquired wisdom ( gaoshô-srûta

1 Ys. xxx, 4.  
2 Ys. xxxi, 22.  
3 Ys. xxx, 3.

4 Ys. xxx, 9.  
5 Ys. xlv, 3 and 6; xlviii, 11 and  
Ys. i, 1.

khratu ). Both these kinds of wisdom are the mother of all forms of moral beauty. All that is good and true in human thought, is due to khratu.<sup>1</sup>

Besides wisdom there is another intellectual virtue which Zoroastrianism enjoins us to possess and practise. It is prudence. Zoroastrian prudence is the most important virtue which is not merely concerned with the proper regulation of life but also demands that man should never lose sight of the great cause of Asha:—"Be it known that he is prudent among men who abstains from uttering and committing the sin that has occurred to his mind ( which has reached him in thought). And the more prudent is he who abstains from thinking of the sin which has occurred to him in desire. And the most prudent is he who adopts ways and means that his will may refrain from sin."<sup>2</sup>

Zoroastrianism lays as great stress on the principle of faith as on the above-given principles of charity, obedience, humility and truth. We, Zoroastrians, must acknowledge the importance of faith, the power which is the strongest that our human nature can own : ".....The more bountiful spirit also chose those persons who please Ahura with deeds done in accordance with the Faith."<sup>3</sup> "This I ask Thee, O Ahura ! tell me rightly that holy Faith which is of all the best and which going on hand in hand with the Righteous Order can promote my lands and which can render actions just."<sup>4</sup> "O Mazda ! he who bends his mind to that which is better and more holy, pursues the Daênâ close in word and deed. His will and wish is consisent with his chosen creed....."<sup>5</sup> "He, O Mazda ! is our abundance and our prosperity who through his good mind considers his Daênâ supreme....."<sup>6</sup> "Those

1 Minoi Khrad, i., 10-13 and 45-61; xxxix, 23; lvi, 18-21, etc.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 392; D. D. Dk. Vol. xi, P. 90, <sup>ys. xxx, 23,</sup>

3 Ys. xxx, 5.

4 Ys. xlv, 10.

5 Ys. xlviii, <sup>24,</sup>

6 Ys. xlix, 5.

priests.....whose faith is devoid of the precepts of Divine Wisdom and of the ideas of Ahura-Mazda,.....are evidently the servants of the false one, and the followers of the Druj ( or Angra-man ).”<sup>1</sup> “ A person is the best among men owing to his knowledge of the good faith.;.....A man reaches Heaven especially through knowledge of the good faith.”<sup>2</sup> “ The man of the divine faith gets an increase of strength through his divine faith.”<sup>3</sup> “Now will I ask Thee, O Mazda !.....what lies within your intention and will so that I may discern rightly how we can speak forth.....that pure Daēnā which is the Faith of Him who is Thy-self O Ahura !.”<sup>4</sup> “ Be it known that ( a man ) becomes good in many ways : especially by putting faith in the religion of Ahura-Mazda, and thereby he becomes a holder of relations with the Creator, Ahura-Mazda. A man becomes more and most good by putting more and most faith in the religion of Ahura-Mazda.....”<sup>5</sup> “ One of the kinds of holy men who help the good religion by words, strengthen it by deeds, are givers of authoritative decisions to the lovers of the religion and embellishers of purity. The fourth kind are of those who keep faith towards God ; and guide coreligionist friends, hoping for holiness by higher thoughts.”<sup>6</sup> “ Be it known that man becomes through all his works and behaviour possessed of the thoughts relating to the other world .....by reposing faith in all holy thoughts.....”<sup>7</sup> Thus we learn from the Zend-Avesta that the value of Faith lies in the union of the human mind with Ahura-Mazda. Faith is belief in Ahura-Mazda. The whole purport of the passages quoted above as well as of the whole Book of the Zend-Avesta indicates that Faith is an humble submission of man’s mind as well as of his will to the Will or Law ( Daēnā ) of Ahura-Mazda ; submission which is

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, Ps. 458 and 459.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 454.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 476.

4 Ys. xlix, 6.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. i, P. 55.

6 D. P. Dk. Vol. i, P. 64.

7 D. P. Dk. S. Vol. ii, P. 68.

not blind or compelled but a free, enlightened, willing and contented submission. To put faith in Him and His Daênâ is to receive and cherish those great truths and precepts which He has bestowed on us through Zarathushtra and from which a pure life flows. Faith is recognition of the divine excellence and authority in those truths and precepts followed up by resolutions on our part to adopt them as our rule of life. Faith is an inward assurance that under the guidance of these truths and precepts we shall attain to perfection. Faith is that belief which tells us that the pure in heart shall see Ahura, such belief leading to the conviction that we must cleanse our thoughts and desires. Faith is belief in the promise that if we ask, we shall receive, followed up by a desire under this persuasion to seek earnestly Ahura's help. Such faith in Ahura which every true Zoroastrian should possess and prize most, is enjoined entirely for its practical effects, because it helps and strengthens us to resist sin, encourages us to seek and acquire that perfection of character which shines forth in the character of Ahura-Mazda.

These are the primary and fundamental principles which Zoroastrianism gives. From the Gâthâs down to Ardâvîrâf and even to the works of much later periods we find that everything has one main purpose, the purpose to bring men to see the nobleness and fruitfulness of charity, obedience, humility, truth, faith and the peacefulness or tranquility of the mind, to teach men the hopelessness, folly, and misery of uncharitableness, disobedience, pride, falsehood, want of faith, and want of mental peace. To live a Zoroastrian life is to live with the good principles to which men are often unwilling to submit ; but in submission to which alone the life of perfection can come to men. Thus, the great truth which the above-mentioned facts of the Zend-Avesta impress upon us, is that Excellence of Character is the great object of Zoroastrianism, the great blessing which it came to communicate to humanity. The highest good which Zoroastrianism effects, is that good which it works

within. The great object is to work a change within the mind, spirit and character of men and the glory of this change constitutes the glory of the office of Zoroastrianism. Righteousness, virtue, goodness, love to Ahura and love to man, in one word, Purity—this is the greatest good which flows from Zoroastrianism. This is the redemption it confers upon man : “Yaozdâo mashyâi aipi zâthêm vahishtâ=Purity is for man from his very birth the greatest good, the best of blessings ; that purity, O Zarathushtra ! which is ( enjoined ) by the Religion of Mazda on him who cleanses his own self with good thoughts, words and deeds.”<sup>1</sup>

As I have said before, throughout the wide world wherever man exists, there exists the moral law ; and so there is also the moral struggle which is inherent in him. Wherever man meets with the human mind, he finds struggle, doctrines against doctrines, politics against politics, history against history, facts against facts, affirmations against negations. Such power of freedom has been given to man that he is capable of exercising it against Nature and reason, against the natural as well as the spiritual order of the world.

Travel where you will, read what books you like and you are sure to find that the moral struggle is not within yourself alone but it is a thing to be found in every society, country and race, even in every illiterate man like the African negro whose instance I have quoted above. Read our Scriptures, especially the Gâthâs, and they will show you that the greatest and holiest Zoroastrian saints, including our Prophet Zoroaster himself, had to struggle against evils and temptations in their desire to be good and to promote good. Our histories as well as our Scriptures will assure you that however man may change from ages to ages, still until man ceases to be man, this struggle for good will ever form the endless aspiration of the human

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<sup>1</sup> Vend v, 21; ys, xlviii, 5.

race. The craving for righteousness and the struggle to obey its law and to fulfil its purpose are innate and immortal in man. Our Scriptures, especially the Gâthâs, represent our state in this world as an active, enterprising, perilous and warring state in which there are great things to be done. This state they represent in a variety of images calculated to impress our mind in the liveliest possible manner.

According to our sacred Volume no battle is so momentous in its issues as that which man is called upon to wage against himself. From this battle none is exempt. The pure of heart like Zoroaster must fight in order that they may retain their purity and innocence.<sup>1</sup> The impure of heart must fight that they may free themselves from their impurities. The fight is neither against human nature nor against its characteristic passions : " For moral struggle man must gird himself, making use of the right understanding ( spenta-man ) and ward off ( angra-man ) and follow Spenâ-mînô. With the strength and courage derived from Spenâ-mînô he should attack Ganâ-mînô. Till the end the fight should be maintained with Ganâ-mînô."<sup>2</sup>

We learn from the Zend-Avesta, especially from its oldest portions, that one single mind is adapted to two different planes of consciousness, namely, spenta-man and angra-man and that these two planes are not adapted to each other and cannot, therefore, remain in harmony. The warring of the two distinct parts of one and the same mind or the conflict between spenta-man and angra-man, that is, between reason and temptation, is experienced by every normal human being.

As I have already said, the Zend-Avesta teaches that the spenta-man and the angra-man in man are the most important and powerful factors in the life of man. They are the principal sources of his good and evil thoughts, of his good and evil

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<sup>1</sup> Vend. xix, 4--9.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol, ix, P. 602.

consciences, of his good and evil will, of his good and evil beliefs, of his good and evil words and actions respectively : "Yea, I will speak forth ; hear you all who come from distant countries..... "I will declare the twin first spirits of the world of whom the more bountiful ( spenta-man ) spoke to the harmful ( angra-man ) thus: 'Neither our thoughts, nor our teachings, nor our understandings, nor our beliefs, nor our deeds, nor our consciences, nor our souls are at one or in harmony with each other'.<sup>1</sup> The spenta-man and the angra-man both offer themselves in man's deeds and ever strive with each other for the mastery over man. Each seeks and strives to lead him into a path and to an end contrary-wise to the other. The angra-man leads him to a path most hurtful and destructive to him and his welfare. The spenta-man, on the other hand, reveals to him the folly and danger of following such a guide. The spenta-man affords such internal illumination and impulses as are needed to enable him to resist the angra-man and its seductions. According to Yasna XLV, 2, there is a constant conflict between the intellectual or the thinking powers of man and between his moral faculties or the principles of volitions. There is a conflict between the good soul and the bad soul, a conflict between the good understanding and the bad understanding, a conflict between the good thought and the bad thought, a conflict between the good conscience and the bad conscience, a conflict between the good belief and the bad belief, a conflict between the good deed and the bad deed. In a word, there is a constant conflict within man between the faculties that are under the influence of the spenta-man in man and the faculties that are under the influence of the angra-man.<sup>2</sup> "The ancient sages among the early followers of the ( Mazda-yasnian ) creed thought thus : namely, in the thought ( arising ) in the life of men, as a good spirit ( spenta-man ) keeps a place ( abides in it ), so also an evil spirit ( angra-man ) holds the

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1 Ys, xlv, 1 and 2.

2 Ys, xlv, 2, ys, xxx, 2-3,

way ( to it ). And in the expression of the mind, as a good spirit keeps a place, so, also an evil spirit holds the way to it. And in the practical action resulting from the thought, as a good spirit keeps a place, so, also an evil spirit holds the way to it. And in the life-prompted emotion or reasoning, as Vohûman ( spenta-man ) keeps a place, ( so also ) Akôman ( angra-man ) holds the way to it. And in a desire resulting from the heart, as Sraosh ( obedience ) keeps a place ( so also ) Aeshma ( anger ) holds the way ( to it ). And in a thought resulting from the desire Spendomat ( humility ) keeps a place, the druj Tarômat ( pride ) holds the way ( to it ). And in the expression or utterance of the thought wisdom keeps a place, so also Iust holds the way ( to it ). And in these several paths and ways there happened the struggle of the Druj with men and whosoever is redeemed in these several paths and ways, is redeemed in every place. And whosoever is allured there, comes then into the grasp of the Druj and is not then able to rule himself, but thereafter he would act as the Druj ( angra-man ) would order him. And we men ought to be alert so that we may adhere to the path of God, and may not go after the drujas.”<sup>1</sup>

When opposite interests are presented to man, when different questions come before his mind, the questions involving the personal welfare of the individual or the questions involving his obligations to his family or the questions pertaining to his duties towards the community or the state to which he belongs, he has conflicting emotions or passions to reconcile, regulate or restrain. Every normal man is called upon to experience the warfare between duty and desire, between right and wrong:—“ There is never a person born in whom these six spiritual things do not struggle: good mind and bad mind, virtuous moral sense and passion, and honour and scorn.”<sup>2</sup> Normally conducted the conflict does not impair or destroy the

<sup>1</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. x, bk, vi, Ps, 1 and 2.

<sup>2</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. x, bk, vi, P. 21.



good nature of man but contributes to the regulation, purification, elevation and progress of the soul of man : " That virtue is best in which one struggles with the spiritual vice (druj) and does not permit within oneself any vice whatever, particularly these five vices : Avarice jealousy, folly, passion, and infamy." <sup>1</sup>

According to the Zend-Avesta the soul or the mind of man is amenable to discipline. All its spiritual faculties namely, intellect, conscience, will and so forth are changeable or convertible and progressive. <sup>2</sup> They are controllable either in favour of or against reason, experience and the evidences of the senses. <sup>3</sup> The mind marshals all such ideas and facts that may have been impressed upon it and that may have come within its knowledge through intuition, observation and experience ; but it sometimes persistently ignores all facts and ideas which go against man's own will. The mind is able to marshal ideas and facts on both sides of a question but it ignores that side with which it is not in favour. <sup>4</sup>

We observe especially in the Gâthâs that the two distinct powers or functions of one and the same mind, namely, spenta-man and angra-man, can control each other. We also observe especially in Yasna XXX, 2 and 3 that affirmation (spenta-man) comes first and negation ( angra-man ) comes afterwards and that spenta-man must be given preference or ascendancy over angra-man : ".....The man who prefers righteousness through his pure thoughts and understanding ( spenta-man ), has an understanding full of pure thoughts. And he who has a perverse intellect full of evil thoughts, prefers sin. Of these the righteous man who follows the lead of the understanding given by Vohuman, deserves praise and good return from the Creator. The righteousness induced by good

1 D. D. Dk. Vol. x, P. 7.

2 Ys. xxxiv, 15; xlv, 8, xlviii, 1;  
xlx, 4. yt, xxii, 14; etc.

3 Ys. xlv, 2.

4 Ys. xxx, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9.

thoughts is due to the grateful understanding which prefers righteousness ( to sin ). "Again the man who hankers after the perverse thoughts induced by the sinful and evil-thought power, is the sinful man who guides himself by his perverse intellect of evil-thoughts,.....The righteous man influenced by the good-thought power has an understanding which prefers righteousness and has nothing to do with the sin induced by the evil-thought power. Hence it is impossible for such a man to have any liking for sinful and perverse thoughts."<sup>1</sup>

Our Book, moreover, says that in the great conflict between spenta-man and angra-man man is not handicapped by a preponderance of the angra-man : " The man who is disposed to make men unhappy, should give prominence within himself chiefly to the virtue of benevolence ( spenta ).....The man who is inclined to deceive others, should think much within himself of doing virtuous acts, so that by strengthening the virtue of doing good acts publicly within men, this vice is weakened and the man's inclination to deceive remains dormant within him."<sup>2</sup> " One who has the good mind ( spenta-man ) as guest within himself, has verily this mark that one is warm in virtue and in confidence with the good and continues in peace....."<sup>3</sup> Thus man can triumph over the druj or angra-man and make it so dormant that the spenta-man can prevail. Through the allegory in Vendidad XIX, 4—9 and through the passages quoted above we learn that there is no loftier sovereignty than that which a man wields over his own mind or inclination. As we see in Vendidad XIX, the sovereignty of Zoroaster over his angra-man constituted the triumph of his free-will. His self-conquest or self-mastery saved him from all those sins to which unbridled inclinations and passions continually expose man. All that we have quoted above, teach us that we should undergo systematic and thorough

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<sup>1</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. ix, P. 556.

<sup>3</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. x, bk. vi, P. 21.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 446.

discipline ; that we must be a master of our intellect and will and that we must let our spenta-man dictate our every word and action and must fight against our inward evil principle ( angra-man ). Our holiest saint, Zarathushtra, has shown that self-conquest is necessary for the practice of virtue. It is a virtue that enters as an essential element into every other virtue: " As for my own part I know why I have come from Ahura-Mazda, the Lord, and I am here to incapacitate the evil principle ( angra-man ) and I shall go back to Ahura-Mazda."<sup>1</sup>

It is the office of the spenta-man in man to decide the contest. The spenta-man is the judicial tribunal of the soul, and in a case of conflict its decision is made according to its training, education and development. Just in proportion to the relative strength of the spenta-man as compared to that of the angra-man the decision goes in favour of right and against wrong ; and a course of conduct is entered upon in accordance with that decision. And it is the aggregate of these decisions that constitutes the character of the individual. It is more than once seen above that the spenta-man is a good and essential faculty in man. Just as it is a necessity and pleasure for a fish to swim, for a bird to fly or for a child to run with all the vitality that it feels in every limb or for an artist to paint with the skill that he feels in his active brain, so it is a necessity and real pleasure for a man to exercise the essential faculty of spenta-man of which he feels possessed. So long as this faculty is not used, there is an impatience in that power. Man feels the urgent necessity to exercise this faculty and experiences the greatest joy through giving it his preference. In our Prophet Zoroaster and in his disciples the spenta-man was regnant and consequently they could live the most happy and joyful life, full of goodness, humility, obedience, contentment and every kind of virtue.<sup>2</sup>

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1 D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, P. 87.

2 Ys. xiii, 15 and 16.

When the spenta-man is dominating in man, both his intellect and his heart are pure and free. He feels himself subject to certain laws, natural and spiritual, to laws peculiar to man, not only directing him to what is useful or beneficial to his corporeal health but towards what is morally right and warning him against what is morally wrong. Through the ascendancy of the spenta-man or giving preference to it man sees all things in himself, in his fellow-being and in the world good, beautiful, useful and beneficial.<sup>1</sup> His surroundings suit him exactly and agreeably. He finds his friends kind, sympathetic and indulgent. His family seems to him the best family on earth. He has no indictment to present against anybody or anything. There is not a being with whom he would not willingly and gladly shake hands. His life to him is a happiness. The profoundest emotion of his soul is one of gratitude to Ahura-Mazda and to all that He has created: "These good thoughts, good words and good deeds, these Haomas, Zaotras, meat-offerings.....and the timely prayers.....these all we offer and make known with praises or celebrations and present them to Ahura-Mazda, to Sraosha, to the fravashis and souls of the saints, to the Fire of Ahura-Mazda,.....for this house, for the furtherance of this house, of its herds, and of its men... We present them to all the fires,.....to the good waters. ....And to these places, pastures and dwellings with their springs of water, their rivers, to the lands, and to the plants, to this earth and to that heaven, to the holy wind, to the stars, to the moon and the sun,.....and to all the creatures of the Spenta-Mainyu.....yea all male and female beings do we praise and celebrate with offerings."<sup>2</sup> "Praise to Ahura-Mazda and to the Bountiful Immortals (Amshâspends). Praise to Mithra, of wide pastures. Praise to.....the sun.....Praise to the Kine. Praise to Gaya-maretan.....yea praise to the entire creation of the holy, to those now living, to those just

1 Ys. xliii, 14—16.

2 Ys. iv, 1, 2, 5, 17, 21, and 26.

passing into life and to those of days to come. And do Thou then, Ahura, in answer to these our prayers and songs of praise, cause us to prosper to salvation through Thy Good Mind, the Sovereign Power and the Righteous Order, that is, through Vohûman, Asha and Khshathravairya."<sup>1</sup> Such are also the good and grateful thoughts and feelings of the holy author of Yasht XIX who having been under the guidance of his spenta-man expressed his praise and admiration of the creation of Ahura-Mazda in these words:—"Ahura-Mazda made the creatures, many and good, many and beautiful, many and wonderful, many and prosperous, many and bright."<sup>2</sup> "Be it known that the cause of the good intention is Vohûman (spenta-man) and its power is the perception of higher efficiency. The cause of the evil intention is Akôman (angra-man) and its power lies in causing gross defects. The improvement of both is by the existence of efficient wisdom. The man of good intention (spenta-man) yearns after good virtues and is unassuming; but the man of evil intention closely searches defects in others while he is hiding his own."<sup>3</sup>

The ascendancy of the angra-man over the spenta-man makes man see all things askew. He sees everything in himself and in the external world distorted. Through the abuse which he himself makes of his thinking and willing powers, he experiences and suffers from restlessness and then curses himself, curses the world, and calumniates it. He does not only slander the world in which he lives but also slanders her neighbours, even the sun, the moon and the stars:—"This man will destroy my regulations or doctrines. He declares that the world (Kine) and the sun are the worst things to look at and he offers the gifts of the wicked (to their daevas). And in the end he will destroy our fields with drought and will throw his mace at Thy saints (O Ahura!). "These wicked men

<sup>1</sup> Ys. lxviii, 22 and 23.  
<sup>2</sup> Yt xix, 10.

<sup>3</sup> D. P. Dk, Vol. vi, P. 403.

will destroy my life ; for they are in sympathy or consultation with the wicked....."<sup>1</sup> But by experience of life when at the fag-end of it he reviews and critically and impartially examines all that he cursed and calumniated, he finds out that the trouble was not with the world, the sun or the stars ; the trouble or the wrong was with himself and was of his own making and that it was in consequence that he had failed to go on the right path of duty and his own destination.

Man deceives himself and endeavours to read his destiny in the stars, to impute his calamities to senseless creatures rather than to his own free choice. The stars and the creatures are not the causes of his destiny or his calamities. These latter are the effects of his own free will. This is what the Zend-Avesta has powerfully impressed on our minds. It was said of a gamester that he looked upon everything as a matter for betting ; in a like manner an evil men looks upon everything as matter for misery and pain. He takes all things around him as things sent to injure him. But the evil that he sees, is mostly due to his own mental evil, to his mental darkness and to the callousness of his heart.

We thus see through the Zend-Avesta why men are shut out from their highest life. The same faculties are given to them by God for their proper and good use: "By his efforts to obtain final and eternal happiness man is saved from the defiled Ahriman.....God has given to all men sufficient ability to save themselves from sin as well as from Ahriman.....; owing to which every created being is known to be able to overcome Ahriman of evil origin,"<sup>2</sup> All the forces of Nature, all things of the world around him, all the circumstances, events, and objects made by Mazda to assist in the pleasure and culture of man, those very things, when the angra-man reigns supreme in

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<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxxi, 10 and 11,

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 441,

man, stand between him and the happiness of his life: "when the two spirits (spenta-man and angra-man) came together in existence, the one (spenta-man) to make (and promote) life and the other (angra-man) to cause life's absence or destruction and to determine for the wicked (angra-man) the worst life (Hell) and for the righteous the best mental state (Heaven), he who was wicked, chose the former but the better and the more bountiful mind (of man) chose Asha."<sup>1</sup>

Every man in this world has a tendency towards death and sin. A notable instance of this is Zohâk who in spite of his knowledge of the Religion of God was seduced to death and sin. He was known to have wilfully and unnecessarily rendered men's<sup>2</sup> lives miserable.<sup>2</sup> So man has the tendency to neglect his functions, natural or spiritual. This tendency is a ruining tendency that lowers man, pulls him down, blinding reason and paralysing will. It is the law of Ahura-Mazda that if any mental, moral or spiritual faculty is neglected, it falls subject to atrophy precisely as is the case with every physical organ in the case of lack of exercise and development. Such neglect is fatal to natural as well as spiritual life. The only thing that can make the spenta-man in man of no effect, is neglect. Neglect in the spiritual sphere involves primarily the impairing of the faculties until the very capacity for righteousness is gone.

There is, so to say, a sense of sight in our spiritual nature, neglect this, leave it undeveloped and you simply see no spiritual being or thing. But you develop this sense and you see even Ahura-Mazda. Then there is the sense of sound. You neglect this and you simply hear nothing. But you develop it and you hear Ahura-Mazda; and the law along which you have to develop it, is known to you. And there is

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<sup>1</sup> Ys, xxx, 4 and 5,

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 462,

the sense of taste, a spiritual hunger after knowledge and truth. You neglect that and all the phenomena of the world grow dim and sink into darkness. But you cultivate it and it illuminates the whole Universe. And there is also the sense of touch to be acquired, that wonderful electric touch called Faith which moves the heart of man and by which he lives a free and composed life. If you neglect this sense of touch, that is, your faith in God, you would have no tranquility of the mind which is most essential for the enjoyment of true and lasting happiness. Nature has her revenge upon neglect as well as upon extravagance. It is quite evident from the Zend-Avesta that a deliberate neglect or negligence is worthy of blame and punishment:—"what is the punishment for him who prepares the throne for the evil, for the evil-doer, O Ahura! for him who cannot reclaim his life....."<sup>1</sup> "He who deceives the saint, shall have later destruction....."<sup>2</sup> A deliberate ignorance is considered sinful and is worthy of punishment: "O Ahura-Mazda! from those who desert Thy bountiful Armaiti, having known her to be beloved of Thee and remaining ignorant of Thy Good Mind, Armaiti utterly departs as the wild khrafastras from us."<sup>3</sup> "Those who, remaining under the power or influence of the worst mind, seek the destruction of life..... (Ahura-Mazda) holds afar from the sight of truth."<sup>4</sup> Thus the neglectful mind is condemned by the Zend-Avesta; because in such a condition the mind does not at all see or sees but defectively and in either case it is deprived of its object and its true function. In such a state the mind is like an eye which sees without seeing or which sees that which has no reality: an organ useless and dead in the first case, a false and dangerous instrument in the second.

If you are a student who scoffs and is irreverent, what has made you so? Possibly the study of that very science

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1 Ys. xxxi, 15.

2 Ys. xxxi, 20.

3 Ys. xxxiv, 9.

4 Ys. xxxi, 13.



which might have bred in you a profound, thoughtful and tender awe of Ahura-Mazda. Or you are a working man and your work has made you bitter and discontented, that very work which was meant to make you happy and healthy. Or you have been rich and your riches have made you proud. Or you have led a life of society and you have grown frivolous and selfish by that contact with your fellow-men which might have made you earnest and loving. These are the powers which ought to make you good and yet do so often make you bad; these are the powers whose mission is to bring your soul to its best attainment but which on account of their abuse and abnormal condition shut your life against the highest and fullest perfection.

Man, as Ahura-Mazda has made him, is good. The Zend-Avesta with all intensity declares this everywhere. It asserts that man's perverse clinging to sin or vice is diseased; that the truly healthy man that Ahura makes, shrinks or has to shrink from every kind of evil. The Zend-Avesta frequently implies and declares the essential enmity between the soul of man and evil. They are in conflict with each other and they will always be fighting. But we are told in Vendidad XIX, 4-9 and Ys. XLV, 1 that the final victory of the soul of man over evil or angra-man is certain, though not without difficulties and disappointments.

The highest hopes and loftiest rejoicings of Zoroaster and his immediate disciples had a touch of sadness to them. As we read in the Gâthâs, their life had been one long struggle after goodness. They slept and woke in the presence of their enemies, their temptations and passions. What a life of persecution, peril and trouble was the life of Zoroaster and of his disciples! Yet their strong undauntable spirits rose triumphantly over all. Nothing deterred them from the battle which they fought with patience and perseverance and won

with greatness and glory. Sufferings, disappointments and sorrows serve a threefold purpose. They serve as chastisement, as means to amendment and as a trial which deepens man's spirit of submission. The school of sufferings and sorrows is the best of all schools for the soul. The virtues which spring up beneath prosperity's sun, are languid for the most part; those which grow from beneath the soil of sufferings, are invariably strong and permanent in their nature.

In the Zend-Avesta we have some sentences exhorting us not to allow ourselves to be so beaten down and crushed by the sufferings and sorrows of life that at length the broken spirit sinks into a morose melancholy, hurtful to itself and repellent to others. Weal and woe are from the hand of Ahura-Mazda who seeks the good of His creatures, whether through joy or pain. When the thorns of adversity prick man, then it is that he enters into himself and has recourse to Ahura-Mazda:—"I turn to Thee, O Ahura! in my afflictions when I feel most the pains thereof."<sup>1</sup> The Zend-Avesta preaches us especially through the Gâthâs that there is more perfection in resisting adversities such as sadness, disappointment, difficulty and sickness with patience than in seriously applying ourselves to good works. Man becomes by such adversities perfectly patient and submissive.

The Gâthâs teach us that troubles and difficulties develop man's character. It was hostilities, temptations disappointments, troubles and sorrows of Zoroaster and his disciples that developed, illustrated and announced to the world and to all ages the perfection and sublimity of their character. He is truly a very unfortunate man who has got no trouble. Trouble is a great educator. We see a musician sit down to an instrument and give a performance that is cold and lifeless and formal. The reason is that all his life he has been

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1 Ys. xlv, 1 and 2.

prosperous ; but now a misfortune or bereavement has overtaken him and you discover the pathos in his first sweep of the keys.

And yet there are those who would say : "Oh, if I had health or wealth or if I had eloquence or if I had high social position, how much I would accomplish ! " But history tells us that a vast multitude of successful men started under various physical disadvantages, under the disadvantages of ill-health, of poverty, of obscure birth or obscure parentage. Demosthenes had by almost superhuman exertion first to conquer the lisp of his own speech before he conquered assemblies with his eloquence. It was sorrow that made John Bunyan the better dreamer and Bishop Hall the better preacher and Havelock the better soldier. Columbus, the discoverer, was a man of humble birth and position. He was the son of a weaver.

It must be well borne in mind that what is true in secular directions, is even much more true in spiritual and religious directions as we learn from the Zend-Avesta. Our Book teaches that a deep significance lies hidden in the sufferings which Ahura-Mazda's hand inflicts on man. It teaches that if you desire to gather roses, you must not shrink from thorn pricks. The leech sucks the blood of the sick man with intent to glut itself and to draw out, if it were in its power, the very last drop. But the intention of the physician is thereby only to remove from the patient the corrupted blood and to cure him. That of Ahura-Mazda is the very same in the afflictions that beset us. And, as that patient would be guilty of great folly who, considering more the greediness of the leech than the good design of the physician, should object to taking away of the corrupted blood ; so when any misfortune or affliction betakes us, whether through some rational or irrational creatures, we are not to heed those creatures but to think of the Sovereign Physician who makes

use of them as of leeches to purify us and restore us to our perfect moral or physical health.

How many have been lost by prosperity who would have been saved by adversity? Was it not prosperity which made King Yima (Jamshed) after so good a beginning to end his life in ruin? When he found himself strong, powerful and prosperous, his mind was intoxicated with pride, self-conceit and disobedience and he neglected and forgot Ahura-Mazda<sup>1</sup> and all the benefits and blessings he had received from Him.

Ahura-Mazda by a special act of grace had elected Jamshed to a position of the highest honour. He had elected him King of Iran and other countries. He had inclined the hearts of all his subjects to his allegiance.<sup>1</sup> And, besides, Ahura-Mazda had revealed to him that He would direct him in counsel and deliver him in the hour of danger; that on his continuing faithful neither the sceptre nor his life should depart from him;<sup>2</sup> in a word, that He would abundantly gratify every good wish he could reasonably entertain.

For a long period did Jamshed rule and there was not a human being of whom Jamshed grew more jealous than he did of Ahura. There was not a human being to whom he proved more false and disobedient than he to Ahura. By a public decree he commanded his subjects to obey and worship him rather than obey and worship Ahura-Mazda, their Creator and Supreme Ruler. By his artful policy he succeeded in alienating his subjects in a body from the worship of Ahura-Mazda, their true God. In every aspect of it the sin committed by King Jamshed and his subjects is represented in the Zend-Avesta as infinitely evil, foolish and execrable.

What the Zend-Avesta would have us understand from the account of the life and death of King Jamshed is that

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<sup>1</sup> See, yt, xix and Vend, ii,

<sup>2</sup> Vend ii, Pahlavi Commentary.

Yima (Jamshed) was a great king and made Iran a great country by means of his mighty power. When he was highly intoxicated with his pride and self-elation, he exclaimed: "Is not this kingdom with all its grandeur and splendor made by the might of my power? What a great man am I? I am more than a man. I am God worthy to be worshipped by man."<sup>1</sup> Such was the haughty spirit, such was the pride, the falsehood, disobedience and envy which caused his downfall and ruin. The first and greatest difficulty which man encounters in his effort to apprehend life's true meaning and object, lies in his arrogance and a false sense of independence. In the words of Aeschylus: "Presumption blossoms and matures a corn-crop of delusion from which it reaps a harvest of tears." Pride is the prolific source of errors. Happiness and pride cannot co-exist.

It was pride that planted in Yima's heart disobedience, falsehood, ostentation, vain-glory and envy of his own Creator and Benefactor, Ahura-Mazda. His pride gave to Jamshed such false satisfaction that his soul became corrupted and seceded from its Creator without his realizing the infernal evil which he wrought for himself. All the evils that sprang from his pride and self-elation, were so hidden from his sight that his eyes could only see when a visible and palpable fall overtook him to his eternal disgrace. Pride associates man with the spirit of darkness (angra-man), and distorts so the vision of the soul that it sees all things ever in a wrong light, as we see, was the case with Jamshed. His life teaches that pride is the great enemy of Ahura-Mazda, that it is an enemy of virtue and the curse of man. According to the Zend-Avesta the very notion of infidelity is founded in pride and disobedience. It is the natural effect of pride to swell the imagination and obscure the understanding and the effect thereof is to induce a fancy in man that the more independent he is of superior authority, the more liberty does he gain.

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<sup>1</sup> Vend. ii, yt, xix and Shâhnâmeh.

The Yasht XIX and the Vendidad II and the Pahlavi Commentary about King Jamshed teach us that a terrible fate awaits men who dissociate themselves from God and betake themselves to downward path, and strive after false liberty. The texts teach us that when the virtue of humility departs, the sense of dependence on the Supreme Authority, Ahura-Mazda, is lost. Such men forget their very Creator ; the very knowledge is lost to them that they are but created beings. Pride becomes master of their heart without rival. Thus, through the loss of humility and of that God-given gift, spenta-man (reason) which makes the distinction between what is of God and what is of His creature, they confound God and nature as one and transfer this confusion to the Universe.

It should be observed that the one adversary of Ahura-Mazda is "druj" =falsehood. The one cause of separation from God and His Heaven is falsehood. The one evil that brought on King Yama the displeasure of Ahura-Mazda, was his falsehood. He uttered the most horrible falsehood when he said to his subjects that he was their God and that they should worship him instead of Ahura-Mazda, their true God. This falsehood awakened rebellion against Ahura-Mazda in Jamshed's own heart as well as in the hearts of his subjects and brought spiritual death to mankind. We are told in the Zend-Avesta that as soon as King Yima was puffed up with pride and spoke falsehood, his greatness and glory, his sovereignty and immortality fled away from him and from his subjects. Thus, then, falsehood or lying is according to the Zend-Avesta man's ruin. One of the most formidable sins is that of lying, deceiving, betraying and labouring against truth. Falsehood robs man of the highest good ; and hurls him headlong from the summit of his glory and felicity.

What is man without intelligence and what is intelligence without truth ? A man deprived of his intelligence is no

better than a beast. Endowed with intelligence but devoid of truth man raises for himself a terrible condition and sinks into an abyss as deep as the infinite. Falsehood was therefore ever abhorred by the saintly authors of the Zend-Avesta. Even in things whose insignificance would seem to excuse falsehood, Zoroastrianism pronounces great scorn on those who utter it.

From the description of the life of Jamshed in our Zend-Avesta we learn that the spirit of pride and falsehood hinders the receiving of faith. It teaches that pleasure in falsehood, pride, disobedience, disloyalty, uncharitableness, jealousy and envy make man's intelligence unable to penetrate into the spiritual world and render his mind and heart incapable of comprehending spiritual and perfect nature of God. The case of Jamshed serves moreover to show how men do often times err, as theosophists do, who misled by self-elation and flattery bring down God to the level of their own souls and claim for their souls level with God, making the material world a changeable garment of illusion to both. How can he believe in God who flatters himself unduly.

Pride, the constant elation of the mind, whilst it leads men to ascribe to the human soul the position of God, Ahura-Mazda, as did King Jamshed of yore, renders the imagination so gross that the proud, like fanciful children, begin to see divinity even in woods and mountains, in caves and streams, in gardens and springs until at last, as is the case with the polytheists, idol-worshippers and others, they assign divinity to everything visible, from the heavens down to the household hearth. Everything in their fancy thus becomes the abode of some God. But the corruption does not stop short here. The wrong conception about God is followed up by the worship of Him in idols as is the case with the Hindoos and Budhists and others.

Now what is this but a terrible subversion of the truth so forcibly impressed on us by our Scriptures that Ahura-

Mazda has made all things and that the action of Ahura is everywhere. The Zend-Avesta declares that all idols as well as the souls of all such mortals who claim divinity, are not gods but demons.

The revolt of the intellect against God leads straightway to the revolt of the animal man ; and the egotism of the interior man breaks forth into the sensuous egotism of the exterior man. He who is not subject to God, cannot subject his lower to his higher nature. The sense of self-sufficiency arises in the absence of the sense of God and when man has lost the sense of accountability to God, he becomes accountable only to his own self; and then what is there he will not do in secret devoid of every shame ?

From the history of the life, death and fall of Jamshed and of his subjects we learn some more important lessons of warning and admonition. First, we learn that when the heart of man goes wrong, the misguided heart is sufficient to rob man of the comfort that can be derived in life. We learn that the possession of riches and affluence cannot make man happy. Though King Jamshed was obeyed, admired and applauded by millions of Iranians, with a heart puffed up with pride and vanity he could never feel truly and inwardly happy. We learn also that sin and worldly vanity are very intimate with each other : that God humbles the proud at the climax of his arrogance : that kingly dignity or high position in life is no apology for transgression of the Divine Law, that pride goes before a fall : that the wrong which man does, rebounds upon himself and others. And so man is responsible for his own condition as well as for the condition of those around him or who are in contact or connection with him.

So we have seen in the case of King Jamshed that he committed sin, gave birth to evil and lost all that was good, noble and beautiful in and outside his self. We have seen that



there is no such absurd idea about sin in the Zend-Avesta as is found in Christianity which teaches that sin is inherent in each individual from his very birth, that all men sinned in the first man, Adam, that all children are under the curse of sin, that Baptism of infants is necessary for the remission of sin and that by Baptism the soul is born again and thoroughly renewed.

According to the Zoroastrian Religion all essential sins or evils of man proceed from his own will. Sin is not represented in our Book as it is in some modern systems of philosophy as merely a minor grade of good. It is the contrary of good. Nor is it represented as a natural and necessary transition from good; nor a natural manifestation of man's limited power.

Zoroastrianism does not allow man to seek palliation of sin or vice by an appeal to the so-called rightful claims of his sensual nature or by laying stress on the overwhelming strength of sensual allurements in the face of a seemingly pardonable human weakness. It makes us understand that, whether in society at large, in the family or in the individual heart, the miseries which spring from the vice of sensuality are endless. It, therefore, brands sensuality as vice and stigmatises it as wholly odious.

Zoroastrianism most powerfully impresses upon our mind the fact that a temperate, well-ordered life free from excess and sensual indulgence is the one safe-guard of the soul against temptations of the flesh. It requires us to practise the most rigid self-restraint in the matter of sensual appetite: "It is said that the man who excessively embellishes himself physically, becomes spiritually ruined and for that reason physical (embellishment) should be moderate, and performed so much that what is spiritual, may not decay. When the wise and knowing ancients perceived the decay of the physical wealth and the permanence of the spiritual wealth, they

recognised as inevitable that in the case of advancing the physical except in moderation, it could not be so advanced that in the case of the spiritual it might not be harmful and destructive. And they would abandon that physical wealth which was more than moderate ..... "It is said that ( there is ) one (unique) remedy and one (unique) doctrine, the remedy (is) the constant thinking of piety.....It is said that moderate eating is good for the body and moderate speaking for the soul."<sup>1</sup> "They even held this thus : namely, the essence of sin is the excess and the deficiency whereas the essence of virtue is the mean."<sup>2</sup> "When a man teaches one of the faithful another faith and leads his fellow-man astray with a full knowledge and conscience of the sin, the man who has done the deed commits the sin of Peshotanu."<sup>3</sup> "For the man who wishes not to perform perverse acts, there is much goodness and for him who desires to do perverse acts, there is the worst evil....."<sup>4</sup> "The whelp of evil is vice and the offspring of vice are avarice, wrath, spite, envy, lying, niggardliness, ingratitude,.....tyranny, imposture penury, deceitful training and distress and distruction....."<sup>5</sup> Zoroastrianism forbids man even as much as to harbour sinful thoughts or even to cherish sinful desires : "Against the body of the harlot,.....offering her person to lust, whose mind wavers and flies like vapour before the wind, hurl thy mace, O Homa !"<sup>6</sup> "When a young man meets with a young woman who is a stranger, who is not his own and they on eating food become satisfied and happy.....still at last that young man does not sleep with that woman for love of the soul, nor does he entertain or cherish carnal desires or appetites, ( that man becomes more holy )."<sup>7</sup> "But that woman should be considered free and innocent who has committed adultery with a stranger but who is proved to have received no aid from other

1 D. D. Dk. Vol, xui, bk, vi, Ps.  
4 and 5.

2 D. D. Dk. Vol. x, bk, vi, P, 11.

3 Vend. xv, 2.

4 D. D. Dk, Vol. x, P. 24.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 326.

6 Ys. ix, 32.

7 D. D. Dk. Vol. xiii, bk, vi, P, 11.

people to save her from the wicked man."<sup>1</sup> So high was the veneration in which chastity was held by our holy saints.

The Zend-Avesta speaks in number of passages of the hatred and enmity that Ahura-Mazda bears to evil or sin. We read in them that Ahura-Mazda is the Cause of all things that happen in this world except evils and that He gives out threats and prescribes punishments for sinners. We read that all evils, spiritual and physical, are ascribed by the saintly authors to the malice or the sinful will of man : " All wicked men ( are ) the embodiments of the Druj ( or Angra-man ), are scorers of the judge ( or justice or right ); all scorers of the judge are rebels against the Sovereign ( Ahura-Mazda ); all rebels against the Sovereign are ungodly or impious men ; and all impious or ungodly men are worthy of death."<sup>2</sup>

Now the important evils mentioned in the Zend-Avesta and condemned as vices and sins of men are the following : Impiety;<sup>3</sup> uncharitableness ;<sup>4</sup> selfishness ;<sup>5</sup> avarice ;<sup>6</sup> usury ;<sup>7</sup> jealousy, envy, ingratitude ;<sup>8</sup> pride, arrogance, self-elation, self-conceit, vanity ;<sup>9</sup> disobedience and disloyalty ;<sup>10</sup> lying, falsehood, deceit, deceitful practices, such as witch-craft, sorcery, magic, spell-binding, superstitious beliefs or practices ;<sup>11</sup> dishonesty, breach of truth, breach of promise or contract, taking false oath, injustice, the unlawful possession or detention of another man's property or goods, causing loss to another man and not making it good, plunder, robbery, theft ;<sup>12</sup> meanness, malice, spite, anger, slander, calumny, back-biting ;<sup>13</sup> deliberate ignorance, neglect or evasion of religious, social and

1 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 411.

2 Vend. xvi, 18.

3 Vend. xvi, 18.

4 Vend. xviii, 34—37.

5 Ibid.

6 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, Ps. 314 and 326.

7 Vend. iii, 41.

8 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 326.

9 Ys. xxxiii, 4; lx, 5; yt, iii, 8, Minōi Khirad xx, 40.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid and vend i and ii; D P. Dk. Vol vii, Ps. 445 and 446.

12 Yt. x, 2, vend, iv, 1—16, D. D. Dk Vol. xii. P. 47, etc.

13 Yt. iii, 8, D. P. Dk Vol, v, P. 325, D. D. Dk. Vol xii, 40 and 47, Vend. ii, 29; xx, 43; etc.

domestic duties ;<sup>1</sup> indifference and indifferentism, heresy, apostasy, infidelity, unbelief, nature-worship and idolatry ;<sup>2</sup> oppression tyranny, cruelty to men and animals ;<sup>3</sup> asceticism, the act of mortifying the body, of fasting and starving the body, celibacy, voluntary poverty ;<sup>4</sup> idleness, want of diligence or negligence to acquire wealth and promote prosperity, beggary ;<sup>5</sup> luxury, extravagance and wastefulness ;<sup>6</sup> Juddin marriage, giving children in marriage to unbelievers or Juddins, polygamy, prostitution, debauchery, adultery, sodomy, abortion, miscarriage ;<sup>7</sup> disregard for sanitary laws, uncleanness, using and eating things that are unclean and forbidden, coming into contact with men or women of infectious diseases, coming into contact with unclean or polluted men or women, bringing or keeping good and useful things of the world, such as air, water, fire, earth, plants, trees, articles of food and furniture, dwelling places, cultivable or cultivated lands clothes and so forth into direct or indirect contact with any filthy, corrupted, corruptible injurious dead matter except under inevitable adverse circumstances ;<sup>8</sup> violence, blood-shed, murder, suicide ;<sup>9</sup> crying, wailing, lamenting over the death of a person.<sup>10</sup>

To enumerate all the vices and sins mentioned or implied in the Zend-Avesta would take up much space of the present volume. So I rest content with giving only those that

1 Minôî Khrîd lvi. 1—7; lix, 6—10; etc.

2 Vend x. 2; D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, Ps. 45 and 46, Minôî Khrîd xxxvi, 16—19; xii, 8 and 9; Sikand Gûmânîk-Vigâr x, 57-60 etc.

3 Vend. iv, 48; xv, 3-8; xii 10-12; D. D. Dk. Vol. x, P. 21; D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, P. 48; D. P. Dk. Vol. i, P. 21; D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 325, minôî Khrîd lix, 8; etc.

4 Vend iii 33, iv, P. 44—48, D. P. Dk. Vol. i, P. 23; Saddar lxxxiii.

5 Vend. iii. 2 and 3, 24—32; xviii, 15—35; D. P. Dk. Vol. ii, P. 75.

6 Vend. v, 59—61; D. P. Dk. Vol. i, P. 3, Vol. v, P. 285; etc.

7 Vend. xviii, 61—65; xv, 9—19; Ys. ix. 32; D. P. Dk. Vol. i, Ps. 15 and 55; Vol. ii, Ps. 74; 90 and 91, Vol. v, P. 315; Vol. xi, P. 82; Minôî Khrîd xxxvi, 27; Saddar ix, 1 and 2, lxiii, 1, 2 and 7; etc.

8 Vend Chaps. v to x.

9 Vend. iv, 17—43 and xv, 12; etc.

10 D. D. Dk. Vol. xvii, P. 22; D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, bk. vi, P. 47; Minôî Khrîd vi, 13, etc.

I have mentioned above. They are sufficient to convey to the reader the Zoroastrian idea of vice and sin. However, to render the principles or the chief elements that underlie that idea more clear I would say in short that according to the Zend-Avesta if a man deliberately thinks evil thoughts, speaks evil words or does evil deeds, if he knowingly and voluntarily and against the Will or Law of Ahura-Mazda abuses, jeopardizes, injures or destroys directly or indirectly or in any way his own life or that of his fellow-man or of any good being in the creation, human or not human, living or lifeless, material or spiritual, he commits sin and is subjected to punishments, corporeal as well as incorporeal, in this world as well as in the next.

Among the great punishers Ahura-Mazda ranks first. He is the source of all prescriptions of punishments.<sup>1</sup> Next to Him comes Zarathushtrîtemô or Zarathushtra (the spiritual Head) and after him is Sraoshâ-verezô (the priest of penance) and last of all other judicial and executive authorities.

The punishments are in proportion to the gravity or heinousness of sin or crime. The punishments are inflicted on a sinful man, woman, society, community or a nation through a fine or penalty, through imprisonment with hard labour, through mutilation with such weapons as whip, club, mace, sword, spear, arrow, knife, through such things as foul food, foul drink, foul air, foul place, dark abyss, dark abode, through violent death, through such natural calamities as infestation of destructive ants, locusts, spiders, snakes, through drought, floods, severe winters, famine, starvation, diseases, plagues, deaths, loss of prosperity and plenty, and through conscience, spiritual death and loss of immortality.

Ahura-Mazda who made Yima (Jamshed) immortal, made him besides the greatest, the most glorious, and the most prosperous of the kings of Iran, and also bestowed upon his

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<sup>1</sup> See the Gâthâs and the Vendîdâd.

subjects exceptional prosperity and plenty, health, happiness and immortality. But King Jamshed, as we have already seen, committed sins and his subjects became abettors of those sins and consequently the king and his subjects brought upon themselves ruin, death and destruction. Greatness and glory, sovereignty and immortality fled away from Jamshed and the most painful calamities such as drought, severe winter, flood, storm, famine, starvation, disease, death and destruction overtook his subjects. How dreadful and sudden was the change wrought for Jamshed and his subjects by their sins?<sup>1</sup>

We learn from the Zend-Avesta that public as well as private calamities are made by Ahura-Mazda to befall men in consequence of their sins and faults. King Jamshed and his subjects fully deserved the miseries they suffered. If we but rightly conceive the enormity of the sins and vices which men often commit, we would look upon the punishments and pains which they undergo, as too little.

Like echo which sound reflects, men's actions rebound to their misery or happiness according as they are bad or good. "Akem akât vanguhm ashm vanghvê=Evil to the evil and good blessings for the good."<sup>2</sup> It is a great maxim and an incontrovertible truth that what we say and do, comes back to us in recoiled gladness or disaster. The above quoted Avestan Text teaches that there is a hostility between good and evil, between holiness and sin. There cannot be and there never has been any sympathy between purity and lasciviousness, between honesty and theft, between diligence and sloth, between faith and unbelief, between light and darkness, between heaven and hell. According to the Text man is destined to be happy or unhappy just as he is inclined to be good or evil. Inclined towards evil he cannot put in a claim for happiness. No power is strong enough to give it. His-

1 Vend. iv. and its Pahlavi Commentary and yt, xix.      2 Ys xliii, 5 and xxx, 5, 10 and 11,

torv holds forth an undeniable proof that the threat conveyed in the Text : " evil is for the evil.....", is no vain threat. Do we not read in Vendîdâd I most clearly all those judgments as they successfully burst over the different regions, over the beautiful lands of primitive Iran ? Do we not read in it about the long and severe winter, the infestations of locusts and ants devouring and destroying cattle, plants and crops : diseases and plagues spreading among the nation and eating up the cattles ? Do we not read in Vendîdâd II and Yasht XIX of flood and snow, of storm, drought, scarcity, starvation, sickness and death devastating the vast kingdom of King Jamshed ? What a frightful fate it was for his kingdom, once so fair, so populous, and prosperous suddenly overrun, with disease, misery and desolation ? What was this but a clear realization of those appalling threats made in the Gathic passages of Yasna XXX, 5, 10, 11 and Yasna XLIII, 5 ?

But how can we account for the calamities which be-took the whole population of King Yima together with the animals, plants and trees of his vast country ? Were there no men, women or children in his kingdom quite innocent ? Were the animals, plants and trees responsible for the sins committed by King Yima and his subjects ? The account of the calamities should cause us no surprise if we were to remember the events of our own times. The truths contained in the statements of Yasht XIX and Vendîdâd I and II are exemplified and confirmed by the most recent events that happened within our own knowledge and experience. We know how Heaven has punished the Germans for their blind faith in the evil men who led them to the great unrighteous war. Germany has suffered and is suffering bitterly and deserves to suffer further for what it has done. Her nation is bound to pay heavy penalties to the Allies, the burden whereof will reduce it to poverty and misery and crush it almost to death. The fires of terrorism are ablaze in the different states of Germ-

any. Through the ruins<sup>3</sup> of the once great Empire the flames have swept westward. But all the misfortunes and miseries that have fallen and will fall upon the Germans, are the price of their own evil doing and a just retribution for their sins and crimes. Pity as we do the innocent among the Germans, we are far more disposed to sympathise with France, Belgium, Italy, America, Australia, India and other countries that have suffered not for their own but for the sins and crimes of the Teutons. In fact, it is the whole world that has suffered.

The moment any great nation is plunged into great adversity, the whole world is affected to greater or lesser extent. The troubles and difficulties of England, France, Belgium, Italy, Russia, America, Australia, India and of other countries engaged in the last great war have caused troubles and difficulties everywhere and have produced the most depressing effect on the rest of the world. France, Italy, Russia are in heavy debt to England. If they cannot meet their liabilities England will suffer. And if England cannot pay its debt to America, then America would suffer. Thus, the one condition of the prosperity of the rest of the world is that each country thereof should prosper and be happy.

The great war again confirms the most important truth indicated in Yasht XIX and Vendîdâd II. It emphasises the fact that the destiny of a king and of his subjects is determined by their character. It is the spiritual element in them that counts for everything and when the critical time comes, it is the spiritual element that endures longest. The striking example of this is afforded by Germany of our own day. In Germany spiritual progress has not kept pace with material. The startling progress which that country made, tended to draw away the minds of men from spiritual objects and led them to worship material force. The Kaiser and his subjects turned away from their true God and considered organised force as all powerful and tried to demonstrate its omnipotence but failed



disgracefully in their attempt and had to submit at last to the most humiliating terms of their conquerors, the Allies. They are now reduced to the most straitened circumstances. For generations they shall have to labour under this condition and to pay the penalty for their neglect and disregard of the soul force, for their infidelity, pride, self-elation, injustice, aggression, oppression, cruelty, manslaughter and other wicked and destructive deeds. It is most deplorable to see such a scientific people in their present plight : men who bartered their invaluable spiritual assets for things which were outward and evanescent and of questionable value indeed.

We have spoken at sufficient length in regard to the corporeal punishments for the sinner. We shall now see what the Zend-Avesta has to say about the incorporeal punishments. It would be difficult to find any other truths so clearly expressed and so forcibly impressed on our minds by the Zend-Avesta than those about a good or a bad conscience.

According to the Zend-Avesta men are happy or unhappy just as they have a good or a bad conscience. Our Scriptures tell us that the best reward of a righteous man is his good conscience. Nothing is more pleasant, more comforting and safer than a good conscience. The man of good conscience, whether in this world or in the next, whether in the best or worst of worldly conditions, would always feel quite happy. Such a man should be able to reconcile himself to any state of life.<sup>1</sup> But what a bad condition is that of a man with a bad conscience ! Bitterness of conscience comprises the worst kind of sadness, melancholy and restlessness. No peace, no rest, no comfort but a great terror falls on him : "He who deceives the saint, shall have later destruction. He shall live long in darkness, foul shall be his food, lowest shall be his speech. And such a miserable life, O you wicked man, your

<sup>1</sup> Vend xix, 29-34; Yt. xxiv, 54-64,  
Aogemaide Frag, 5-24.

own (evil) conscience will bring you."<sup>1</sup> Never can it be said of him that the days he spends, are happy. Angra-man lets him no wealth, no peace ; but in the last hour of his life when he needs a solace, sends tearing across his conscience a file, a file : "O thou, my perishable body, think good thoughts, speak good words and do good deeds and do not throw me down in to the Var (abode) of Angra-man, dreadful, terrible, dark, undiscernible which Angra-man has fabricated at the bottom of the dark world of endless abyss."<sup>2</sup> The Zend-Avesta reveals to us the great truth that the world has no torment equal to that of a guilty conscience. It shows that even had we no other restraint left to keep us aloof from sin, guilty conscience of itself alone ought to be quite enough to convince how ill it fares with every sinner. The Zend-Avesta gives a clear idea of the carnage and havoc which sin makes in a variety of ways in the conscience of man.

No one can deny that the pains of a woman in child-birth are very severe but when once delivered, she is so delighted to find herself a mother that she immediately forgets all her sufferings. But according to the Zend-Avesta such is not the case with a soul when it gives birth to a sin. It is quite the reverse then. At the time of giving birth to sin the sinner does enjoy some pleasure ; but the sense of remorse, anguish, and distress is so intense as to banish the joy which precedes it. No sooner, however, a man is delivered of that deadly offspring, sin, than at the sight of its vileness he suffers pain more excruciating than what a woman undergoes in bringing forth a child.

Exile certainly is extremely painful ; and yet Ovid preferred it to the sufferings of a guilty conscience. Blindness is unquestionably painful ; and yet Prestes preferred it to the sufferings of a bad conscience. What did Plautus, the Comedian, declare ? He declared : " Nothing is more wretched than

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<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxxi, 20.

<sup>2</sup> S. B. E. Vol. IV, P. 376 Aogemaide.

a soul conscious of guilt." Is it not clear from the writings of Plutarch, Seneca, Plato, the great teachers of morality, that they did not consider it possible for a man to be ever more severely punished than by his own conscience? Our holy Zoroastrian teachers, ever entitled to our esteem and reverence, portray to us in a vivid colouring the wretched state of a sinner. They had taught men long before the Greek and Roman authors came into existence that the cutting reproaches of a bad conscience are unbearable.

From the statements made in the Zend-Avesta in regard to sin and their punishments we find that according to Zoroastrianism the effects of sin are experienced by the sinner not only after his death but even while he lives in this world. Here on this earth he suffers physically as well as spiritually. Not only is he punished by Nature, and by his fellow-man but also by his own self, by his own conscience. Men practise deception upon themselves by supposing that the consequences of their sins or misdeeds cannot at any rate overtake them before death. But Zoroastrianism tells us that every conscience is a book of judgment and Ahura-Mazda as the recording Supreme Judge marks therein every sin. As all will be judged by the Great Judge some day in future, all are judged by conscience now. The process is in full operation now. Our sins and their punishments are not stored away somewhere to be let loose upon us only when we die ; they are always with us, within our conscience in this life. No doubt, the Zend-Avesta distinctly shows us that the punishments of sins find their consummation in the life to come. However, Ahura-Mazda makes the sinful soul realize through the conscience something of Hell's torment even here on this earth.

Whence comes this monitor? We have seen that it comes from Ahura-Mazda. It is through conscience that Ahura rewards virtues and punishes vices ; and it is so not merely in this world alone but also in the next. Thus, then,

according to Zoroastrianism man's conscience not merely judges about the morality or the immorality of our acts ; but it also executes sentence. Any violation or disregard of its dictates is visited by bitterness and gnawing remorse. This always afflicts and pursues him wherever he goes<sup>1</sup> And as Byron reminds us : " Nor ear can hear, no tongue can tell, the tortures of that inward hell."

Now we come to the last but not the least of the punishments for the sinner, namely, death. We are told in Yasht XIX that in King Yima's (Jamshed's) reign there was neither old age nor death before he took pleasure in falsehood. In Vendîdâd II and in its Pahlavi Commentary we read that King Jamshed and his subjects lost for ever their glory and immortality which were bestowed by Ahura-Mazda, because they committed sins, especially the sin of infidelity to God, Ahura-Mazda, their Creator and Supreme Benefactor. It is quite certain that by the sacred Texts above-referred to nothing else is meant than spiritual death, the death of man's soul.

Before I proceed to speak at length about spiritual death it is necessary to explain fully in what does spiritual life consist according to Zoroastrianism. The Zoroastrian Religion is a spiritual guidance for its followers, meant to give them the best spiritual strength and spiritual life. There is nothing in its dogmas and doctrines or in its outward observances calculated to separate the soul from Ahura-Mazda.

If a man shrinks from the obligations which the spiritual life entails, the powers of darkness will lay on him so heavy and shameful a burden as would crush the best and noblest. The burden of the spiritual life of him who follows the Zoroastrian ideal, is light and sweet because of the entrancing excellence of the truths which the religion comprises.

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<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxxi, 20, Yt. xxii, Vend xix, 29-34 and Aogemaide,

These truths bid him to seriously and sincerely desire and to strive for the perfection of spiritual life. We must therefore first know wherein the perfection of spiritual life consists.

Some people for want of knowledge of the Zoroastrian idea of spiritual perfection imagine that such perfection is attained by leading an austere life ; by fasting, rigorous exercises, bodily affliction and the like. Others maintain that progress in spiritual life is attained by several recitals daily of long prayers. There are many besides among Zoroastrians who persuade themselves that perfection is attained by frequently visiting the temples and burning several pounds of sandal-wood on the sacred Fire. There are some again who believe that the Zoroastrian ideal of spiritual perfection can be reached by performing or asking others to perform too many rites and ceremonies for their dead or living kinsmen and friends. But they are all wide of the mark. All those who place exclusive faith in these outward forms and ceremonies, do often endanger their perfection and happiness; because they pin their attention so exclusively on rites and ceremonies that they leave their inward souls neglected. How dangerously such souls deceive themselves and how widely do they often go astray from the right path of perfection, is easily perceived by the rest of their actions. Such is their vain persuasion that they think\* they walk and talk with Ahura-Mazda and other invisible souls and spirits. Those who wish truly to understand their own state and to realize how false is the foundation of the edifice of their feigned devotion, should learn and know what is meant by spiritual life in the Zend-Avesta.

It ought to be placed in the fore-front of all Zoroastrian teachings that Zoroaster's mission on earth was to give men spiritual life. He was appointed by Ahura-Mazda to this task on this earth so that he might teach men how best they may

attain to spiritual and eternal life. That he carried out his mission in the most perfect way imaginable, is seen best from the whole course of his preaching and personal demeanour. He taught men that there could be nothing in creation which a rational being should esteem so vitally as the life of the soul within him. The soul of a man is more precious to him than the whole visible Universe. Zoroaster taught humanity to rise above animal instincts, to develop the soul to perfection and to let soul fulfil its destiny by living what is the best spiritual life and attain thereby to complete happiness: ".....Whosoever does anything in this world, increases or decreases his soul. All kinds of acts are performed by men for their own souls. And ( therefore ) we, men, ought to be highly exerting thus: We long for our own soul's happiness, not misery."<sup>1</sup> " The soul of man never remains in one single place (=is convertible); since according to its principle it is progressing or regressing." As to its progress and regress this is said thus: " As long as man follows spiritual desires it is progressing, when he follows bodily desires, then the soul deteriorates."<sup>2</sup> " The soul is to be estimated according to power, ( according to its virtue or excellence ), but power is not to be estimated according to wealth. The higher the soul is in the scale of virtue and excellence, the higher the degree of such true power."<sup>3</sup> " Material wealth should not be immoderately embellished since the man who immoderately embellishes material wealth, is a destroyer of spiritual wealth."<sup>4</sup>

There are three essential conditions of a spiritual life. The first is the organism, the second the environment and the third the union of both. In the spiritual life the first is the human soul which contains within itself only one-half of what is most essential to spiritual life ; the second is the Environ-

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1 D D. Dk. Vol. xi, P. 95.  
2 Ibid P. 79.

3 Ibid P. 62.  
4 Ibid P. 49.

ment, Ahura-Mazda, in whom the other half of the spiritual life is contained and the third is the communion or correspondence between Ahura-Mazda and the soul.

The Zend-Avesta is nowhere more impressive than where it insists on the fact of man's dependence, viz, that man is utterly helpless without the strength and support of Ahura-Mazda. The first condition of entrance into the spiritual kingdom is for man to feel his helplessness and to have implicit faith in Ahura-Mazda.

We read in the Zend-Avesta that through his intellect man's soul asks questions to his Environment :<sup>1</sup> "Who is the first father or source of Asha, the Right Order, Truth?" Another question is : "Who is the main source of good or love (Vohu-man)?" yet another is : "Where is He to whom I would turn for help and consolation in my disappointment and sorrow?" It may be said that in the first and the second strophes of Yasna XLVI is summed up the whole of the anthropology of the Zend-Avesta, the completeness of man in Ahura, his incompleteness apart from Ahura. In them man's littleness and helplessness are clearly expressed, and the sense of man's imperfection made quite evident. The sense of need and the sense of Environment are so real in man that he calls out to the Environment addressing it in words and imploring it to satisfy his need.

To all such questions that the human soul puts to its Environment as aforesaid the only answer which the Zend-Avesta gives, is : Ahura-Mazda. The Zend-Avesta tells us that there is none so good, so holy, so truthful, so just and so powerful as Ahura-Mazda. We often read in it that Ahura-Mazda is the Most Benevolent Spirit, the Holy Creator of the worlds, the Almighty Lord who gives prompt help to all those who deserve it and ask for it.<sup>2</sup>

1 Ys. xlv, etc.

2 See especially the Gáthas,

It should be well borne in mind that the Zoroastrian life is not a vague effort after righteousness, an ill-defined, pointless struggle for an ill-defined pointless end. Zoroastrianism is no confused mass of aspirations, prayers and faith. Zoroastrianism holds forth an ideal as indispensable in all true human development, effort and achievement. All men whose lives are based on principle, must have an ideal more or less perfect. It is such an ideal which deflects the will of man from what is base and turns the wayward life to what is holy. Believers as well as unbelievers must admit that Zoroastrianism holds forth to the world the perfect Ideal, Ahura-Mazda. We must first of all recognise that ideal, so that having recognised it we may conform ourselves to it. However not all of those who recognise it, conform to it. Many recognise Ahura as the perfect Supreme Being and yet do not conform to His Law.

Now the great question is : How is a Zoroastrian to conform himself to the Highest Ideal, Ahura-Mazda? The mere knowledge of the ideal which we get from the Zend-Avesta, supplies us at times with nothing more than a motive. How is the process then to be practically accomplished? Zoroastrianism has no such doctrine regarding the moral and spiritual life as what the Christian Church calls the doctrine of Human Inability. According to Christianity it is Christ and the Holy Ghost that work out the salvation of man. Man is as helpless to advance his moral and spiritual growth as he is to add a single atom to his body.

The Zoroastrian Religion, on the contrary, finds in such a doctrine the most fatal obstacle to the moral and spiritual progress and prosperity of man. It bids man to work out his own salvation by deeds of righteousness and to attain to the ideal Life and to conform to the Highest Ideal, Ahura-Mazda : "O Mazda ! I would ask Thee this question : 'How such a holy man as he who with wise actions has striven to promote (Thy) rule or authority over house, city, country through the



Righteous Order, may become like Thee (thwāvās) and through what actions he may so become?"<sup>1</sup> "On what is your Kingdom founded, O Mazda ! What is your Wish or Will ? ( Tell me ) so that I, remaining in Thy friendship through my actions done with righteousness and good mind, care for ( Thy ) poor....."<sup>2</sup> "I ask Thee this, O Ahura ! tell me rightly, how, O Mazda ! shall I proceed to that friendship or love with You, to that perfection of your own so that my spoken wish may be fulfilled, the wish to be in the chieftainship by means of the hope of obtaining Weal and Immortality and by that Māthra which guides our way to Righteousness."<sup>3</sup> Thus Zoroastrianism tells us that man is not utterly helpless but has ability to move onward and help himself towards Ahura-Mazda. None enters the kingdom of Ahura-Mazda unless he thinks good thoughts, speaks good words and does good deeds. Intellect, will and conscience are provided ready for him ; but to will and do the Will of Ahura are left to man himself. As I have shown in the foregoing pages, man has the largest share in living and maintaining his own moral and spiritual life as he has in living and maintaining his natural life.

To live is to correspond and to correspond is to live. This much is true in science as well as in religion. According to Zoroastrianism the man who has Ahura, has life—an eternal, everlasting life: but the man who has not Ahura, has no life. So all that threatens man with natural death, cannot destroy his spiritual life and his spiritual faculties. It would be quite unnatural for distress, persecution, famine, starvation, peril, sword and so forth to do it. It is quite natural for the spiritual environment to supply and satisfy the spiritual faculties.

The influence of environment is one of the greatest and most substantial of modern doctrines. There is now no need to speak about the influence of environment in forming or

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1 Ys xxxi, 16.

2 Ys. xxix, 5.

3 Ys. xlv, 17.

transforming organism or of its influence in developing function or determining growth. Environment can of course comparatively induce little changes in man's body; but how plastic, how infinitely sensitive is his soul? We all must admit with Ulysses: "I am a part of all that I have met."

The influence of environment on the spiritual nature of the man who corresponds with Ahura-Mazda. is immensely great. His spiritual faculties become quickened. In communion with Ahura-Mazda he learns every day something from Him and through that knowledge and through vital connection with the Supreme Holiness he becomes holy.

Evolutionists tell us that by the influence of environment certain aquatic animals have become adapted to a terrestrial mode of life. Breathing normally by gills as the result of a continued effort carried out from generation to generation to inspire the air of heaven, they have slowly acquired the lung-function. Can the evolutionists dare to question the possibility of the human soul to acquire spiritual development when it is in contact with the higher spiritual atmosphere of Ahura-Mazda? It is easy to see how the moral and spiritual man is acted upon and changed continuously by the influences, secret and open, of his surroundings, by the tone of society, by the company he keeps, by his occupation, by the books he reads, by all that constitutes the habitual atmosphere of his thoughts and the little world of his daily choice.

It is also not difficult to observe that with a changing environment such as that possessed by the body there must always remain the fear of a falling out of correspondence. But with a changeless environment such as that possessed by the soul in communication with Ahura the perpetuity of the correspondence is guaranteed. Death is the necessary result of imperfection. Imperfect correspondence gives imperfect

and uncertain life. "Perfect correspondence" would be according to Herbert Spencer "perfect life." Therefore to abolish death it is necessary to abolish imperfection. It is the chief aim and end of Zoroastrianism to abolish spiritual death by abolishing imperfection. The best means our religion suggests to abolish imperfection is to seize every opportunity of more and more perfect adjustment to the best and highest Environment, Ahura-Mazda. It is this Environment that is the secret of a well-ordered and successful life.

It is a well-known fact that the function of environment is not only to change, to modify but chiefly to sustain life. Every living thing requires for its sustenance and development an environment containing air, light, heat and water. In addition to these there must be a constant supply of food. Knowing all this, we can at once understand how without environment there can be no life for our natural organism, the body.

We have also the spiritual organism, the soul. In this there is a principle of life but that is not self-existent nor self-sustaining. It requires something in which it can live and move. It requires a spiritual environment. Without it our soul is like the fish without water. And what is that spiritual environment? It is Ahura-Mazda. Without the Environment of Ahura-Mazda there is no life or energy in the soul. Whatever power or energy the human soul spends, has been acquired by it from none but Ahura-Mazda. As we have seen in the beginning of this chapter, man is not according to the Zend-Avesta his own creator and sustainer. Ahura-Mazda is his Creator and Constant Giver of strength and power. Communion with Ahura-Mazda, is therefore a scientific necessity. Nothing can help him more in his struggle in this world than this Environment of Ahura-Mazda. The prosperity of the natural life owes all to Environment, so does the prosperity of the spiritual life of man owes all to the Environ-

ment, Ahura-Mazda: " O Ahura ! has my soul ever desired or indeed obtained helping grace from any one ?.....Who for myself other than Thy Righteous Order, Thy Good Mind and Thyself, O Lord ! tell me....."<sup>1</sup> " This I ask Thee O Ahura ! tell me rightly, so that I may ponder on these, Thy revelations.....and may attain through Thy Righteous Order to our life's perfection. Through what goodness will my soul increase in joyfulness and satisfy its own desire ?"<sup>2</sup> It is not an uncommon thing to find in the Zend-Avesta the human soul spoken of as seeking and finding its life, its growth, development and perfection in Ahura-Mazda. He is, so to say, its native air. Ahura-Mazda as the Environment of the soul has been from the earliest age down to the latest periods of the Zoroastrian literature the doctrine of all the deep Zoroastrian thinkers. The Gâthâs, the Zoroastrian Psalms, are profoundly saturated with this sublime thought. As we read these Hymns, we clearly notice how natural a thing it was to the Gathic poets to long for Ahura-Mazda ! How joyous a thing it was for them to seek Him ! How artlessly they prayed to Him to receive and entertain them in His Spiritual Kingdom: "Praises, songs and adorations do we offer to Ahura-Mazda and to His Asha ;.....And to Thy Good Kingdom, O Ahura-Mazda ! may we attain for ever and a good King be Thou over us.....so mayst Thou be to us our life and our body's strength.....and that for both the worlds....." " Let us obtain long life, O Ahura-Mazda ! in Thy grace and through Thy Will may we be powerful. Mayst Thou continue to help us long and with salvation.....Thy praisers and Mâthra speakers may we be called. O Ahura-Mazda !.....Thou hast appointed ( in Thy Kingdom ) for the souls deserving reward which we entreat you to grant on us for this life and for the life of mind or spirit. Grant us so that we may come under Thy protecting guardianship and that of Righteousness for ever....."<sup>3</sup>

1 Ys. 1, 1.  
2 Ys. xlv, 8.

3 Ys. xl, 1—5.

As we have pointed out, according to the Zend-Avesta the human soul is the organism of the spiritual world. The goal of the soul is to develop according to the Law of Ahura until its final perfection and its friendship and company with Ahura are reached and until it enters Heaven ( Garônmâna ), the Highest Kingdom of Ahura-Mazda.

Science has very little to say on such a Kingdom. It speaks of the first kingdom, namely, the mineral or inorganic kingdom. It declares that although it is dead, it furnishes the physical basis of life to the second kingdom, containing the plant, animal and man. Science also discloses that the first kingdom is the preparation for the second kingdom and is below it. But it has been given to Zoroastrianism to disclose the third Kingdom. It is above both the first and the second. It is the Spiritual Kingdom ( Khshathra-vairya ). It is the Highest Kingdom. It is the Kingdom of Heaven. According to the Zend-Avesta the Founder of this Supreme Kingdom as of all other kingdoms, is Ahura-Mazda.

Zoroastrianism lays before us the imperious claim of the third Kingdom upon its subjects in the most impressive way. It tells us that the organism, the soul, must live for its Spiritual Kingdom. It is the law in all departments of Nature that every organism must live for its kingdom. The Zarathushtrian saints thus enunciated a principle which all Nature supports and confirms. It is a matter for great anxiety and sorrow that the neglect of this principle and the absence amongst us of a sufficient number of followers to imitate our holy saints in respect of this doctrine have been causing and spreading spiritual deterioration and decay in our community.

The Religion of Zoroaster shows that the distinctions of the Spiritual Kingdom from the kingdoms below it are fundamental. The former requires of its subjects or members activities of a spiritual order. The obedience Zoroastrianism

demands from its followers to the law<sup>s</sup> of the Spiritual Kingdom, is absolute. It enforces upon its adherents the demand of allegiance to Ahura-Mazda, the Supreme King of the Spiritual Kingdom. No impartial scholar or student of the Zend-Avesta can deny that an essential difference exists between our religious system and all other systems based as they are on the lines of natural religion. The essential point of difference consists in the urgent demand which Zoroastrianism makes upon its adherents for an uncompromising allegiance and entire surrender of their body and soul to Ahura-Mazda. Such surrender is to be made manifest by the general bent of their lives ; by their secret desires and their spontaneous actions

The allegiance consists in the corresponding of the soul with its Environment; in the regular exercise of the faculties for corresponding with the Divine Environment, Ahura-Mazda. Those who pay such allegiance, may be justly said to be living the spiritual life. It cannot be said of a soul that it is leading a spiritual life simply because it knows distinctly what spiritual faculties and their functions are. It is only when it makes proper use of those faculties and discharges those functions properly that the soul lives in the spiritual sphere.

The one essential condition of a spiritual life, as declared in the Zend-Avesta, is the friendship of Ahura Mazda. In other words, the soul must seek His presence and strive to be like Him by acting according to His Will or Law. "Thwâvâs mazdâ ahurâ yadâ hvô=Like Thee may we be, O Ahura-Mazda !" And we are like God when we dwell or live within His sight, in His presence and in conversation and consultation with Him ; when we think His thoughts, and see the working out of His purposes and make them our own and rejoice in our taking part in their fulfilment. This is to be like Him : "I invoke Thy Sraosha (Obedience to Thy Law or Will), the greatest helpful guardian, thus gaining eternal life in Thy Sovereign Kingdom, in the Realm of Thy Good Mind and

approaching those paths that are straight and leading to Asha, in which Ahura-Mazda dwells. "I also invoke Thee through my righteousness and seek eagerly from Thy Best Mind and with good intentions to know how He thought of the working in the fields. Therefore O Mazda ! I beseech of Thee for a sight of Thee and for consultation with Thee ( darshtôishchâ hem-parshtoishchâ )....."<sup>1</sup> If, on the material plane we live well, when we accord well with natural forces ; if by understanding their laws and obeying them we make them build us up to our best ; if in society by knowing and cooperating with our fellow-men we share their goodness and vitality, then, in the same way, if we understand and obey and sympathise and cooperate with Ahura-Mazda, our life shall be like His life and we shall live like Him.

How can we enter into such sympathy and cooperation with Ahura-Mazda ! We learn from our sacred Volume that we can enter into it through Sraosha=Obedience to His Will or Law. If through Sraosha we enter into His sympathy and cooperation and help Him in any humble way towards His results, then do our best powers of life come forward to carry out their work and we live but truly and genuinely.

Now the question is : What may we hope for if we live in the presence of Ahura-Mazda, in His friendship, in His companionship, if we live like Him as Zoroastrianism bids us to live ? First of all, most of all, the simplest things which have seemed superficial to us, shall grow deep and sacred. All things will change their aspect and show themselves in their true colour and worth. We will be able to see all those evil things that keep us from believing that we have some part of God's spiritual nature ; that we are called upon by Him to share His life and to work for what he is working : " To the wise as to the one discerning with his mind these things are

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<sup>1</sup> Ys, xxxii, 5 and 6,

clear. Through Thy Good Mind and Kingdom he follows the Righteous Order both in his words and actions. And, therefore, to Thee such a man shall be the most helpful being (in your work).''<sup>1</sup>

In the examples of Zoroaster and his immediate disciples and successors we see that the influence of the Environment of Ahura-Mazda on the spiritual nature of the men who opened correspondence with God, was immensely great. Their faculties having been quickened by the spiritual atmosphere of the Divine Purity they became pure. Having been in constant communion and companionship with Ahura-Mazda they became perfectly spiritual and having attained spiritual perfection they became immortal so that their souls should live eternally: "To us (His chosen saints) Ahura-Mazda gives the two greatest gifts, namely, Perfect Weal and Immortality, through His Bountiful Spirit on account of our best thoughts, words and deeds.....''<sup>2</sup>

As we ascend in the scale of life, we rise also in the scale of longevity. The lowest organisms are, as a rule, short lived; and the rate of mortality diminishes more or less regularly as we ascend in the animal scale. A certain condition in the environment fails to be met with by a corresponding condition in the organism and this is death. And conversely, the more an organism by virtue of its complexity adapts itself to all the parts of its environment, the longer it lives. The conditions here given are found in Mr. Herbert Spencer's definition of eternal life: "Perfect correspondence would be perfect life. Were there no changes in the environment but such as the organism had adapted changes to meet and were it never to fail in the efficiency with which it met them, there would be eternal existence....." Now if we place this definition of Science along side the several statements made by the Zend-Avesta,

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1 Ys. xxxi, 22.

2 Ys. xlvii, 1.



especially by the Gâthâs, in regard to the eternal or everlasting life, we find that eternal life is to see or know Ahura, to correspond with Him and be His companion. The organism of the human soul which attains to this correspondence with the Perfect Environment, Ahura-Mazda, must live for ever.

All lives indeed consist essentially in their correspondence with various environments. The artist's life is a correspondence with art ; the musician's with music. To cut them off from these environments is to cut them off their life. To be cut off from proper environments is death. When there is either partial or complete want of these correspondences in living beings, they are partially or completely dead.

As in the case of natural death, so also in the case of spiritual death there are two factors to be examined, namely, organism and environment. In the spiritual sphere the soul of man is the organism. In the natural sphere the organism is the body of man. By the natural environment we mean the entire surroundings of the natural man, the entire external world in which he lives and moves. When he is not in correspondence with the natural surroundings, he is dead. By the spiritual environment we mean the consultation and companionship with Ahura-Mazda. The want of this communion and companionship is the essential nature of spiritual death. In the absence of this Environment the starved soul must perish for the want of its native air.

Every kingdom has its peculiar laws and punishments for disobedience. So the third Kingdom which is the Spiritual Kingdom, claims likewise an exclusive obedience to its Law and punishes disobedience or disloyalty with suffering and even death. We have already seen in the middle part of this chapter that the earthly minded King Jamshed and his subjects lost their glory and immortality and were punished

with various natural calamities such as famine, starvation, plague and death.

According to Zoroastrianism spiritual life is the sum-total of the functions which resist evil. Its functions are, as we have already shown, goodness, humility, obedience, truth, faith and so forth. The soul's atmosphere is the daily trial and temptations of the world. We learn that from the allegory of Vendîdâd XIX. As it is life alone which gives the plant power to utilize the elements and resist death, so it is the spiritual life alone which gives the soul power to utilize trial and temptation. If we refuse to exercise the functions mentioned above, we cannot resist and escape spiritual ruin and death. The soul, so to say, dies, sinks into gloom and utter darkness, and goes to ruin not because Ahurîa-Mazda passes sentence of ruin upon it, but because it cannot help going to ruin. In the case of King Yima we saw that the soul neglected the true functions which could resist evil and ruin. So the punishment of ruin and death was in its very nature: "The souls of worshippers of Devas and of deceitful Ashmoghs, owing to their impure nature, although (located) in a living body, are, according to the religion, (as if) possessing a dead body: and that body with life is considered as fit for hell: .....therefore the Mazdayasnians must remain aloof from touching their living bodies, for their bodies are in all places like decayed Naso."<sup>1</sup> "Man (who) is of perverse behaviour, is an acquirer of death, an instructor of men in death, an injurer of good men and like a chief of sinners."<sup>2</sup> "Perish away O Druj ! Perish away to the regions of the north, never more to give unto death the living world of Righteousness"<sup>3</sup> "The bodies of those men who injure the strength of the world by wicked deeds, are lifeless owing to their destructive deeds and their dead bodies being rotten are infernal,"<sup>4</sup> "If

1 D. P. Dk. Vol. 1, P. 31.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. 1, P. 53.

3 Vend. viii, 21.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 496.

a man is gifted with good objects but his nature is evil, then through that man's actions there is no existence for his soul. The life of the soul is from ( or due to ) the adoration of God with ardour."<sup>1</sup>

Do we not all know what it is to be punished by Nature for disobeying it? If we look round our hospitals, prisons, or madhouses we see that Nature punishes the sinful. As we look around us, we find that if there is no one presiding on the throne of Heaven in the expressive capacity of a judge, there is still a judgment in inexorable Nature which cries aloud for justice and carries out her heavy sentences for the violation of laws. Ahura-Mazda seems to have given Nature the law into her hands. According to the Zend-Avesta He has established in His Natural as well as His Spiritual Kingdom two laws upon which His sentences shall be based. The one is : "Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The other, : "If man neglects his functions natural or spiritual, he cannot escape punishment." In the accounts of King Jamshed and of his subjects we see that both these laws exist alike for the high as for the low ; we see that even those wicked men who were rolling in worldly goods and riches, who were dazzling the world with their splendor and glory, could not escape the consequences of their sins or the punishments which they derived. Their triumph was short-lived. They prospered for a while but in a brief while disasters rolled upon them in shoals. They fell from the acme of their prosperity to the lowest of adversity and misery. They lost their greatness and glory ; they lost both their body and their soul Immortality or eternal life fled away from them. Their life became bitter and their eternity still more so.

From these accounts and from other passages of the Zend-Avesta we learn that an indissoluble bond exists between

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<sup>1</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. xi, P. 92.

sin and death. We learn that it was sin<sup>f</sup> that brought death into the world; that sin and death both entered the world through man. But this does not mean that there was no dissolution of the body in this world prior to the time when King Jamshed, King Kaus and others committed sin. We are quite certain that physical death there was always. The Zend-Avesta, especially the Vendîdâd, speaks of the natural death, of the reduction of the body to dust. We find accounts of the disposal of the dead bodies of the most holy as well as of the most unholy persons of the remotest ages.

But life and death in the sense of the Zend-Avesta imply more than the mere unity or dissolution of body and soul. They imply that further element which denotes the end or continuance of moral relationship with Ahura-Mazda. To die is to turn away, to become separate from Ahura-Mazda; to live is to be within the sight (*daresâma*), within the reach or influence (*pairithwâ*) in the constant company or touch of Ahura-Mazda (*hamem hakhma*). Yasht XIX, Vendîdâd I and II with the Pahlavi commentaries speak of death as entailing through the consequences of sin loss of communion with Ahura-Mazda, moral atrophy; the greatest deterioration of the spiritual organism, the soul.

So severe is the punishment of spiritual death that the sinner is kept ever in a state of grêat fear and terror after the commission of sin. We are told by the Zend-Avesta that fear is man's penal torment which he receives for his sin. The fear or the horror which the sinner feels, is so great that it causes him great anguish and makes him actually tremble, confounds him and even drives him to madness. This inward fear or horror is enough to make the sinner wretched if there be no other punishment for him.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Yt. xix, 34; Yt. xxiv, 27, Yt. x, 37, 97; xi, 6.

From Yasht XIX, 34 we see that King Yima admitted a very terrible sin into his soul which was originally pure and innocent and immortal. Overcoming the terror and fear which his sin first inflicted on him, he deadened the first sensitive nerve of compunction, and reached such an extreme point and sank so low in depravity that instead of regretting and repenting he rejoiced in and exulted over his having committed sin and thus gloried in shame and disgrace. Is there any greater blindness or madness than that which takes pleasure and pride in committing sin or which seeks glory in shame and disgrace? What was this absurdity due to? Evidently it was due to his confused or abnormal mental state which he himself caused by having committed the most horrible sins of falsehood, pride, disobedience and infidelity. This mental state was the principal cause of his utter defeat at the hands of his foes. The nineteenth Yasht tells us that he "was confounded" and fell on the ground before his conquerors.<sup>1</sup>

From our holy Scriptures we observe that our remote Zoroastrian saints and sages kept themselves from sin because they always entertained the love and fear of Ahura-Mazda ; because they knew the absurdity of attempting to conceal their sinful deeds from God and to escape punishment for committing them:—"The questions which are asked openly or secretly, or the men who are severely punished for the smallest sins, on all with your sharp eyes Thou (O Ahura !) art gazing as a righteous Guard (or Judge)."<sup>2</sup>

Aristotle made out his theory of morality. He made out a list of virtues and the motives for practising them. So also did Plato and the Stoics, the Hindoos and the Chinese. But without Zoroastrianism and without the love and fear of Ahura-Mazda which it infuses, the motives for acting upto

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1 Yt. xix, 34.

2 Ys. xxxi, 13.

that theory cannot satisfy ordinary minds. Why may not a man enjoy himself as he likes? Why may he not forego a happiness held out to him by a philosopher? Though he does wrong, is the wrong-doing so very much worth considering in an existence like this where nothing is great? But considered as sin against God, involving the loss of His sight, of His conversation, consultation, company and friendship, wrong-doing is but a fearful thing, a tremendous error according to our sublime Religion.

Search carefully where you will, the history of mankind, you will not find a man who was ever proud of his having committed blunders, even ordinary blunders. Herodes Atticus, the Athenian, the first orator of his day, as he was making a speech in the presence of the Emperor Marsus Antonius, was suddenly seized with loss of memory; he wandered in his thoughts, he became speechless, quite unable to recover the thread of his argument. He felt so ashamed that he fell sick and losing all relish for food and resigning himself to despondency was very near dying. Sophocles had produced on the stage a tragedy; it failed to obtain the unanimous applause of the people. He, therefore, was so ashamed that he went and inflicted on himself severe corporeal punishment.

When men boast of their sins, we may be sure that they have accustomed themselves to sin wilfully and with a high hand against their God, Ahura-Mazda, against their conscience and against their society. Such men trace their sufferings to any other cause or causes rather than to the malignity of the sins from which they suffer. They pay consequently no heed to the supreme Law as revealed by Ahura-Mazda for their own weal and welfare. They pay no regard and reverence to Ahura-Mazda Himself, and gradually divest themselves of that fear which is natural to man that there is a God who knows and is perfectly acquainted with all his doings in this world.

The question may here well be asked: "Is there no such thing as moral purification according to Zoroastrianism? If a man is a sinner once, must he always remain a sinner and an unforgiven sinner?" No "Be it known that the salvation of the soul shall be attained by the currency of that great remedy, sinlessness or the elevation of one's being by the apprehension of sin as well as by abstention from sinful acts and by the knowledge of the good religion and the innate good sense (spenta-man) given by God. Every intelligent human being shall be as capable of avoiding sin as of tending to acts of merit. Thus the man of this material world is formed always capable of redeeming his soul from sin."<sup>1</sup> The famous allegory of Vendîdâd XIX, 4—9, tells us distinctly that only one touch of real will is sufficient to help man out of the worst state in which the violence of unrestrained passion might carry him.

Zoroastrianism reveals to us the urgent need in man of the consciousness of guilt or sin and of repentance with a view to amendment of life. The Zoroastrian is urgently required by his religion to make sincere repentance for past sins, to make resolution to sin no more, to exercise continual and complete self-restraint, to guard against opportunity for sin and to make steadfast and zealous efforts after that virtue or good which he needs. If a man commits sins in ignorance of the Law of Mazda, if he makes confession of the Religion of Mazda and resolves never to commit again such forbidden deeds, then his sin is taken away from him.<sup>2</sup> "For the soul that is rendered unholy and polluted by sin, if by the injunction of the Dastoor, it be a hearty or sincere repentor for sin, a seeker of pardon by speech, repentor by deed, there is remission of committed sin through the physician of the soul, the Dastoor and the soul becomes purified of the unholiness and pollution of sin and thus the road to Hell is cut off."<sup>3</sup> "They

<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P, 405.

<sup>2</sup> Vend. iii, 40.

<sup>3</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. 1. P. 9.

held thus: namely through expiation there remains no passage to hell. And through non-expiation there remains no passage to heaven. Expiation is that wherein one is in contrition with repentance for a sin committed, and does not commit that sin again.”<sup>1</sup> “.....It is easier to wash and make clean the contamination and pollution that reach the body than that which reach the soul, (since) it is not then possible to wash and make (the latter) clean except by intense and troublesome repentance and punishment and retribution.....  
...And thou shouldst be penitent for every sin and fault which (occur) in daily work, with this thought: ‘I shall not commit it again; and thou shouldst revert from it and be with repentance for it. And every day at least three times thou shouldst take account of thy own person even as to this: What have I eaten, what have I saved to day, whether what was done (was) for the deliverance of my soul or not.....’”<sup>2</sup>

The repentance is made during the short daily prayers which every Zoroastrian is required to recite while unbinding and rebinding the kusti (the sacred girdle) on his sacred shirt (sudreh) a number of times daily for the atonement of sins voluntarily or involuntarily, knowingly or unknowingly committed by him. No Zoroastrian can neglect this daily duty because none can vouch for all the thoughts he has thought, the words he has spoken, the deeds he has done during the day, to be above condemnation or fault. Thus, we see that according to Zoroastrianism sin is not deemed to be inherent in man nor as being invincible. Man can avoid sin and purge himself of it and rectify his conscience and amend his life as forsooth he is ever bound to.

In the case of Zoroastrians it is not their Prophet who does penance and makes satisfaction for his follower's sins; we Zoroastrians are not exempt from our responsibility for sin

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1 D. D. Dk. Vol. x. P. 14.

2 D. D. Dk. Vol. xiii, P. 10.



as are the Christians. May I ask : Is it consonant with the Divine Wisdom of Ahura-Mazda that He should exempt guilty men from the obligation of reparation and repentance for sin ? The Zoroastrian Revelation teaches that repentance is a stern necessity for the sinning man. Ahura-Mazda does not work alone in the plan of Divine Providence ; it is ordained by Him that His rational creature should cooperate with His Creator. Zoroastrianism tells us that man is not absolutely without power or ability to move onwards and help himself towards Ahura-Mazda. According to the Zoroastrian Religion Divine Help and human cooperation are each the complement of the other.

The fundamental idea of the Christian religion is an easy and handy salvation for man. The bargain of "believed" and "saved" leaves very little for the soul to do ; because safety or salvation is promised from the first. According to Christianity a man undergoes one great act of faith at the beginning of life and there remains no longer any need of mental, moral and spiritual efforts, no more need of high progressive education and development of the faculties. The fundamental idea of the orthodox Christian is that man's chief end is to escape punishment. By the Christian Scriptures the future of staunch Christians is guaranteed although they may be incapable and absolutely unworthy of receiving salvation and entering the Kingdom of God.

But according to Zoroastrianism such cheap salvation is not the condition of the membership in the Spiritual Kingdom of Ahura-Mazda. The Zend-Avesta is deadly against all parasitism as such. Men who lead an idle life, who do not take the trouble to maintain themselves, who beg at the door of others, who rob others of what belongs to them, in a word, all those who produce nothing for their own and for the general good but live at the expense of others, have been severely condemned by the Zoroastrian Law.

Parasites are the paupers of Nature. There are certain plants which begin life and work diligently as though they mean to live independently. But after a certain period they do not support themselves but entirely live upon adjacent plants. Why do the botanists speak of such plants as degraded, and despise them as ignoble creatures in Nature? Because they live a selfish and undignified life by securing the benefits of life while evading its responsibilities. Such a life is a perilous life; because by such a life the plant suffers in its own structure to the extent that it borrows from adjacent plants. It deteriorates in certain important parts of its structure and becomes partially or wholly atrophied. By a cheap expedient to secure safety it fatally loses its independence. Thus we see that in the eyes of Nature parasitism is a crime. Its punishment is deterioration.

From the study of parasitic plants such as the Dodder, of parasitic animals such as the Hermit-crab, it is easy to see how anything that contributes to the safety or salvation of the individual without requiring of him personal effort or vital exercise of the faculties, is disastrous to moral and spiritual character. When we study the effects of the principle of parasitism in the spiritual sphere we find that great ravages are done by the parasitic habit on the souls of men, and can easily judge the effects and influences which such a parasitic doctrine as the Christian Doctrine of Salvation must produce on the mind of the average man.

It should be noticed that the superiority or inferiority of a religious system can be best measured by the influence it makes for good or bad on ordinary and illiterate masses. Christianity, especially orthodox Christianity, Roman Catholicism, offers to the souls of men an assurance of salvation at the least possible cost. And this assurance, held out to humanity, serves as a tempting bait for illiterate masses, scattered everywhere through out the globe, who allured by its promises, help

to swell the ranks of the Christian community. This offer of safety to men, irrespective of the use which they should make of their faculties to work out their own salvation, has reduced the end of religion to selfishness and induced thousands and hundreds of thousands of men to betake themselves in idle faith to the house of refuge, Christianity. Can there be any offer more tempting to a sinner than the offer made through the parasitic Christian Doctrine, briefly expressed in the following sentences:—"Christ died for sinners; and therefore if you are a sinner, he died for you.....Christ saves sinners. By grace are you saved through faith and he that believeth the Son, has everlasting life." The religion that preaches such a doctrine as is evident from these quotations, is spiritually disastrous. And the doctrine which ministers to indifference, makes parasites of humanity and not men. Far from ministering to moral and spiritual advancement, it ministers to moral and spiritual decay. One by one the moral and spiritual faculties droop under its influence and die and the moral and spiritual activities cease. On the other hand, Zoroastrianism, as we have shown, does not promise such mechanical security to undeserving souls of a perfect salvation after death. All parasitic men who evade the great law of work, are considered as sinners or offsprings of Angra-man and for them punishments are prescribed by the Zend-Avesta.

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Zoroastrianism condemns every sort of parasitism and parasitic piety. In Yasna XXX and XLV, Zoroaster preaches to his hearers his doctrines and principles. He offers truths in a compressed form, all sound and wholesome, sanctioned and authorised by Ahura-Mazda. But when he does so, he does not say that they must be accepted automatically. The Great Preacher well understood and knew that his listeners could not use them by the mere listening; but that they must work for, think and ponder on the offered truths, doctrines and

principles; dissolve, digest and absorb them; that they must do all this for themselves and within themselves.<sup>1</sup> Ahura-Mazda has placed all the various spiritual faculties at man's disposal but man must work to get the best of them: "Exert yourself to store pious wealth (merit) for yourself in the next world, because only by the good which you yourself do, will you become a sharer in all the good deeds of the world. Make the Yazatas (Ijads) dwellers in your person, because if you cause them dwell in your body, you will be welcomed throughout the world. Improve yourself by means of the good doctrine that you may be regarded throughout the world one reformed."<sup>2</sup>

Nature gives man corn but he must sow it. "When barley was (sown) and produced, the daêvas started up; when it grew, then the daêvas fainted; when the ear came, the Daevas flew away."<sup>3</sup> Nature has furnished mines with coal but man must dig it. Corn is perfect, so are all the products of Nature perfect but man has to work in order to make use of them. "Through good works and the growth of good works is the recompense of the soul, so that they should do those good works in atonement for sin. And concerning the sin eradicated it is said: 'An original good work eradicates original sin and the growth of a good work eradicates the growth of a sin.'<sup>4</sup> ".....Whosoever is capable of remedying every object pertaining to himself, is by reason of his communion with the all-informed source of remedy (spenta-man). The living human being has at his command all such restoratives owing to the efficient intelligence....."<sup>5</sup>

An infallible standard is a temptation to a mechanical faith. Infallibility, such as is preached by Christianity, gives rest but it is a complacent and idle rest upon authority and not

1 Ys. xlv. 1, xxx. 1, 2 and 3.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P 315.

3 Vend. iii, 32.

4 Dd. xii, 4 and 5.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 412.

a hard-earned personal possession. This Christian Doctrine of Infallibility, deadens in man all corporeal, intellectual and spiritual efforts. Under it the moral responsibility is reduced to nothing. Anything which destroys responsibility or transfers it, is injurious in its moral effects. The man who possesses it, becomes a parasite and at last ceases to be a man. Thus, then, Yasnas XXX, 2. 3 and XLV, 1, teach us that it is necessary to be active as to be orthodox and we can only be truly orthodox by being convinced, by seeing with our own eyes, by understanding with our own minds and by believing with our own hearts and by being honest and sincere. "An idle life" says Goethe, "is death anticipated."

Here it may be asked whether or not the outward forms of Zoroastrianism, the saying of prayers, the visiting of Fire-Temples, the performing of rites and ceremonies for the dead or for the living, tend to induce the parasitic habit, to lead to the evil of parasitic piety. Human nature is a spiritual nature ; but it is environed by a world of sense and seeks a necessary foothold there. Outward forms exercise a powerful influence upon the interior man. Exterior worship is in correspondence with the needs of human nature. Religion developed to the full and in harmony with its true nature must of necessity embrace the whole life of man, his exterior as well as his interior life. Inward faith which lacks all outward or social expression, is an unnatural and in most cases an impossible thing. Every perfect religious system demands from its followers the observance of the outward forms as well as the cultivation of the inward piety. When both these departments of religion are kept up side by side, when their separate functions are not forgotten, when the one is not made to do duty for the other, the object of the perfect religion is perfectly gained. To suppose that inward devotion can be sustained without external acts, is one of the miserable sophistries of our day in which indolence and indifference seek to disguise them-

selves under the pretence of philosophy of religion. However, outward form is worth nothing unless it is an expression of inward devotion. •

All must agree with Zoroastrianism that the essence of perfection consists in the purity of the heart.<sup>1</sup> Yet our religion does not fail to impress very strongly the fact that no man can attain to such purity of heart unless he be extremely careful in guarding his senses and preserving the exterior purity.<sup>2</sup> Nature never produces a tree without bark, or a fruit without skin. Ceremonies and rites are the bark and skin of all interior purity. If you take this off, the rest will be quick decay and corruption. The exterior is the index of the interior. It is unquestionable that interior purity constitutes the main part of our Zoroastrian Religion. From early days Zoroastrian teaching has laid stress on the necessity for inward religion but it has never sanctioned any neglect of exterior worship. We see from our Scriptures that the Zoroastrian saints took part in the ceremonies prescribed by the Zoroastrian Law or *Daênâ* (*Dîn*) and complied with the external usages of their day.<sup>3</sup> Whatever Zoroastrianism required of them in respect of outward forms, they did duly fulfil. Their example teaches us that our adoration of Ahura-Mazda must be both outward as well as inward. It teaches us to be simple in our adoration and worship.

Simplicity is one of the great characteristics of our religion. We trace it in the absence of the magnificence with which the Christian Churches, the Hindoo and the Moham-madan temples are invested. We trace the evidences of its simplicity in the absence of elaborate decorations of gold and silver and precious stones, of the rich and beautiful things of the earth in our places of worship as also in our rites and

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1 Vend. v, 21.

2 Vend. Chaps v to x.

3 Ys. xlv, 8—10; ys, iv, 1—8, etc.

ceremonies. Our religion prescribes as a rule thriftiness which forbids us to cause waste of any kind.<sup>1</sup> It does not want that rich gifts, precious stones, delicate embroidery, gorgeous temples should be the source of our incitement to honour Ahura-Mazda. Let us then be like unto the wise holy saints of yore who taught us by precept and example simplicity so well. Let us, therefore, put ourselves in the spirit of our ancient holy men and like them offer our loving praises and humble devotions and what is best of all, offer to Ahura like our remote forefathers our very souls and bodies as loving sacrifice to Him<sup>2</sup> in lieu of trays brimful of sweetmeats and fruits and flesh of the fowl or fish to which our present Zoroastrians attach so much importance and preference. Let our rites and ceremonies thrive in simpler offerings. Let our temples as well as our rites and ceremonies be devoid of outward pomp. Let us forego the bad habit of imitating non-Zoroastrian communities in their love of pompous expensive style of worship.

The great wealth of ritual and devotional practices which has developed in the course of centuries out of the simple forms of primitive Zoroastrianism, the true Zoroastrian should look upon as in harmony with the purposes of Zoroaster and as a provision for the consolation and spiritual advancement of the faithful. Many of our Parsis, however, profess to see in them nothing more than wanton excrescence. But what we here speak about is not excrescence, but the original substance. It is true that the human mind is a subtle thing and unsound developments are never far to seek. The exterior practices of devotion may therefore become a source of evil in many cases. Small minds, incapable of distinguishing between end and means, are apt to find occasion in such practices for endless anxiety and doubts which hamper their progress in the path of sanctification. There will always be some who are

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<sup>1</sup> Vend. v, 60—62.

<sup>2</sup> Ys, iv, 1, xxxvii, 3; etc.

content to seek their salvation and perfection in the rigorous performance of the minor details of religion, in outward rites, in meat and drink offered to the holy departed souls or spirits. But in all such misconceptions of the rites it is not the exterior practices which are at fault but the carnal spirit which lurks in the human heart and which renders it so hard for man to penetrate into the true meaning of the Law of Zoroaster.

The true Zoroastrian is never a slave to the outward forms of religion. It is the duty of every Zoroastrian not to mistake the outward forms of Zoroastrianism as what is vital and all-important in the religion. But unfortunately the tendency amongst our orthodox people is to substitute the outward form for inward piety. For an example, some of the orthodox Zoroastrians spend most of their time and energy in saying prayers at the cost of their other duties. No doubt, the saying of prayers is what every true Zoroastrian should consider as an inevitable aid to the ripe development of his spiritual life. But to say too many prayers at the expense of important duties of life or to get the priest to recite them with a view that one may reap all the spiritual benefits of prayers thus vicariously offered, is to abuse the sacred institution. The result of such a parasitic habit is that men thereby make no real solid improvement or progress in their moral and spiritual life and that they give, in consequence, a false conception to the world of the true spirit of the Religion of Zoroaster.

Now we have done with the spiritual nature of men as treated in the Zend-Avesta and so we would proceed to show what our Book has to say about his physical nature. But before we do so, it is necessary to repeat some of the most important facts in regard to man's soul and to deeply impress them on the reader's mind with just and proper comments and commendations.



As we have already shown in the fore-going pages, according to the Zend-Avesta man possesses the two opposite planes of consciousness : spenta-man and angra-man. Man is invested with the best faculties or powers such as spenta-man and fravashi which are capable of restraining and regulating his passions and directing the current of his thoughts and deeds into legitimate channels, capable of refining, purifying, and elevating the lower passions and propensities and converting them into the noblest impulses and making them promotive of the highest and the purest devotion, the most charitable devotion of which the soul is capable. So man need not be afraid of the mental operation called "angraman" through which he is capable of entertaining and exercising violent passions, of thinking evil thoughts and doing evil deeds. To conquer angra-man man has also the will-power and volition. Thus, then, it may have been seen that the Zend-Avesta, especially the Gâthic portion, has by its theory of man's dual mind and his freedom of will solved the most difficult problem of the existence of evil, especially of spiritual evil in this world in the best possible way.

It must be well borne in mind that the Zend-Avesta tells us that Ahura-Mazda fully and perfectly performs his part of duty to save man-kind from evil by His instructions, counsels, warnings, threats and punishments. He continually suggests to our minds various ways for our salvation. Especially do we see through our sacred Hymns and other parts of our Scriptures how many are the lessons which He vouchsafes ; how many are the good thoughts which He inspires ; how many are the ways in which He awakens us to the care of our salvation ? Has He not told us that the sinner will be punished in this life and in the life to come ? Why should we not then avail ourselves of a warning for our own admonition as is conveyed in the words : "akem akâi vanguhîm ashîm vang-

ahvê=an evil man to an evil end and good blessings or riches for the holy."<sup>1</sup>

So according to Zoroastrianism man and man alone has by breaking the Righteous Order ( Asha ) of Ahura-Mazda introduced into the world sin which is the source of pain, sorrow, all sorts of evil and spiritual death. Man is to be held responsible for all these. He is constituted by Ahura a free moral agent. By this agency which is the greatest gift of Ahura bestowed on man, he holds the brightest dignity and position in the world. Without it he could not have been elevated above the level of the brute. Without it civilization would have been impossible, morality a false name and religion non-existent.

We shall now dwell upon the subject of man's physical nature as briefly as possible ; firstly because the main subject of the present chapter is the human soul ; and secondly because a lengthy treatment of man's physical nature would require more space than we can conveniently spare in this volume.

As we are told by our Book, man is a complex being. By his soul he belongs to the spiritual order ; by his intellect to the intellectual order ; by his will to the moral order ; by his body to the physical order ; and by his dependent and responsible nature he belongs to the social order. About the soul, the intellect and the will of man we have spoken sufficiently ; so we shall now speak about his body and his social nature.

According to the Zend-Avesta matter has no independent existence. The existence of the body depends on the soul ; and the soul and the body both depend on the Supreme Being, Ahura-Mazda. However, Zoroastrianism does not carry its opposition to materialism to extreme points. It does not tell

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† xhvi, 5,

us that the only certain thing is mind and that matter is but a doubtful and uncertain inference of the human intellect. The Zend-Avesta does not overthrow the universal conviction of mankind that there does exist matter or the material body and that the evidence of the senses are not untrustworthy. It does not teach that man suffers from something like a delirium ; that everything he experiences through his senses, is an illusion of the mortal mind.

No doubt, it forcibly impresses upon us the incontrovertible fact that man's mind or soul is immortal and is far superior to the body, to the five corporeal senses ; but it does not want us to believe, like the Christian Science, that bodily sickness or illness is an illusion to be annihilated by the mind alone ; that disease is an experience of the mind and that it does not exist in reality ; that nothing possesses reality or existence except God. This reminds us forsooth of Pantheism.

We are told by Idealism that man is a compound idea or reflection of God ; that man has no separate mind from God and therefore is eternal. According to this opinion all reality is spiritual. This is what we call spiritual Pantheism. Man is declared to be perfect as God, immortal and coexistent with God, incapable of sin, sickness and death. Man has not a material habitation for spirit or soul but is himself spiritual.

We know that the art of healing is considered as one of the most important arts by the authors of the Zend-Avesta. The art was practised not by ordinary men, or by laymen but by the priestly class which was held in high repute and great honour in those days. The priests cured diseases and received their fees. They removed physical disorders not only by using spiritual remedies, by Māthras ; but also by the use of herbs, plants and besides by surgical operations.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Vend vii, 36-44.

They seem to have understood, as we now do, that disease is an abnormal condition of the body, that Nature is endowed with a power to restore the body to its normal state and that the province of the physician is to exercise his skill in assisting Nature by counteracting or removing whatsoever hinders its wonderful recuperative effects.

Moreover, our ancient holy priests seem to have well realized the fact that the dominant mental or spiritual state of man has either a wholesome or a depressing effect upon the organ of the body ; so that many of the ills of which people complain, may be dispelled by a complete and radical change of one's spiritual or mental condition. Hence it was that they not only employed the material means to cure diseases but also the spiritual. They gave their patients not only herbs and plants to eat but also instructed them in the natural and spiritual laws as revealed by the Māthra Spenta ( the holy Word ) ; because they were perfectly aware of the fact that mental or spiritual impressions act through the nervous system upon the organs of the body so as either to stimulate or to obstruct their functions. Thus, fright, grief, despair, hope, cheerfulness, all register themselves in the bodily condition. The holy ministers of ancient Iran, having always kept this fact before their mind, gave preference to the Māthras for curing diseases. Before all other means and remedies they employed the remedy of the Māthra with a view to fill the mind of their patient with faith, hope and cheerfulness and through them to arouse it out of its morbid condition ; also to stimulate the sluggish organs of the body to activity and give them strength to resist and get rid of the disease. Thus we understand why our ancient priests so highly commended spiritual knowledge, and considered and employed the holy Mathra as the best of all means to cure bodily disease. They well knew that the Māthra, that is, the teaching contained in it, gave one such habits and put one in such a condition as was most favourable for physical health ;

"If several healers offer themselves together, O Spitama Zarathushtra ! namely, one who cures with the knife or a surgeon, one who heals with herbs or a physician, and one who heals with Mathra or a priest, let one apply the Mâthra-Spenta: for this one is the best healing of all healers who heals with the holy Word: he will best drive away sickness from the body of the faithful."<sup>1</sup> "The physicians for removing the diseases of the body are of the following five kinds:—Of these, one occupies the highest rank, one the lowest rank and three are of intermediate rank. Of these those who avert the diseases of men from motives of righteousness and for the sake of the renown that attends only upon them (such motives) are the best physicians ; those who are actuated by the rewards and renown of this world, are physicians of intermediate rank, and the physician of the intermediate rank is the ordinary physician.....  
...Among these the physician, who looks to the renown of pure righteousness, must be considered the most noble in rank, must be relied upon and honoured."<sup>2</sup> "Asha", says Yasht III. "is the remedy for all diseases and sickness and evils, bodily and spiritual." "A Dastoor (highpriest) who has been tried and chosen, is a physician for removing the diseases of the soul."<sup>3</sup>

As we have already said in the begining of the chapter, the soul is superior to the body:—"The soul was brought into this world from the spiritual world where it was created by Ahura-Mazda: it is invisible, intangible, immortal and its abode in this world is the perishable body. The soul is one and indivisible. It is not in every organ of the body but still it gives motion to every member of the body. Without it none can move about and work in this world. The body is sustained so long as it is united with the soul. The growth and development of the body is due to the progress it makes

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<sup>1</sup> Vend vii, 44.

<sup>2</sup> D, P, Dk Vol, 1v, P. 231.

<sup>3</sup> D, P, Dk. Vol. 1v, P. 232,

through the invisible spirit. The man works for the good life of his body through the spiritual powers which work for his (virtuous) existence.....'Through such powers is the body able to perform the functions necessary to the soul. Through soundness of the body is the preservation of the soul. All Iranians by so regulating their life can live with a superior kind of strength.....''<sup>1</sup> According to these sentences the body is inferior to the soul, it depends on the soul and a sound body is in a sound mind or soul. "It is owing to the soul that the body is well warned. Each (body or soul) is rendered dull by the weakening of the strength of the other: for when any of the powers of the soul becomes enfeebled, any one of the powers of the body is brought to a stand-still. And when harm is done to any part of the body, injury is caused to its correlated soul. Therefore, it is owing to the purity of the soul that the body pertaining to this world becomes valuable. And the acquisition of purity by the soul is through the powers of the body pertaining to this world."<sup>2</sup> "So health is of two kinds.— of these one depends upon the acquisition of ( virtue ) merit through the good qualities of the soul and upon the improvement of the powers of the soul. The second health refers to the body: it consists in the safe ordering of the members of the body. A man who is intelligent and sound in every member of the body, is the man who is strong for the invisible world as well as for this world."<sup>3</sup> No man can possess a good body unless he possesses a good soul. Men with the best souls are only those whose bodily systems are perfectly sound. The good condition of the soul and the good condition of the body are always concomitant. Hence the Religion of Zoroaster makes the care of our physical health a Zoroastrian duty. The Zoroastrian may say. "Here is my body. Ahura gave me this body for

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, Ps. 557 and 558;  
596 and 599; Vol. v, P. 30; etc.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, Ps. 191 and 192.

3 D. P. Dk. xv, Ps. 189 and 236.

right and noble uses. If I hurt or neglect my body, I insult Ahura-Mazda and invoke dreadful retribution."

I assure the reader that Zoroastrianism is the greatest of all the friends of health and longevity. The world has not seen a medical science which gives such minutest instructions and prescriptions for the preservation and promotion of man's corporeal welfare as are contained in the Zend-Avesta, especially in the Vendîdâd. Knowing well what important part man's health plays in the moral and spiritual life of man, our ancient Zoroastrian saints exhorted their followers to take great care of their body. They themselves were very careful of their health. They were not only taking substantial and sufficient food but they were trying and seeking all sorts of comfort and ease for the body. Because they believed that to do so was to furnish themselves with weapons against Angra-men.<sup>1</sup> Hence they never thought of enfeebling their bodies by fasts, vigils or mortification, by subjecting themselves to severity of life or imposing upon themselves rigorous forms of labour with an eye to reducing strength. They believed that man's advancement towards perfection was handicapped by mortification and maceration. "Give that man health of body, sturdiness of body, victorious strength of body, full welfare of wealth, long long life, give him the bright happy all blissful abode....."<sup>2</sup> "I created for the faithful, the help, the enjoyments, the comforts, and the pleasures of Khordâd....."<sup>3</sup> "Here, O good, most beneficent Ardivi Sura Anâhîta! I beg of thee this favour: that I, fully blessed, may conquer large kingdoms, rich in horses,.....rich in aliments, with stores of food, with well-scented beds that I may have at my wish the fulness of the good things of life and whatever makes a kingdom thrive."<sup>4</sup> "It is said that as to what is necessary for

1 Vend iii, 2-3 and 28-33, iv, 44-49,  
vin, 29 and 70.

2 Yt, i, 33.

3 Yt. iv, 1.

4 Yt. v, 130

the life, is diligence and for the soul, duty and as to what is necessary for the time of passing away, good career: and for the life, health and food and comfort and fearlessness and joy, necessary and for the soul self-exertion for meritorious actions and abstinence from sin..... The best of these several things (are): health from moderation and plenty from blessedness and joy from straightforwardness, and comfort from contentment .....and the name and fame that are exalted results from virtuous actions.”<sup>1</sup> “.....All those practices for the continuity of bodily existence are so related to the adoration and extollings of and devotion to the commandments of the Deity, that from every quarter the body and its endurance are well helped on account of the adoration and praise of God..... And even with the desire of food as coupled with the utterance of praise and thanksgiving with perfect sincerity. And even with delightful taste, the perfect cleaning of foods and drinks and the managements of the sacred feast and all practices of a non-luxurious kind are much approvable among the intelligent people ”<sup>2</sup>

The Zoroastrian Religion is a great friend of health and long-living in the fact that it urges the faithful to keep his body and everything in Nature free from all impurities by every possible means at his disposal;<sup>3</sup> also by the fact that it is a protest against indolence and idleness. There is happiness and growth in working.<sup>4</sup> Man, here below, is meant for active work. If we look to the arrangements of Nature or indications of what man's life is meant to be, we see at once that she has provided humanity with both the means and stimulus for work. She has set the cock crowing at dawn to summon man forth to his work and to make him ashamed of keeping in bed longer in idleness.<sup>5</sup> Hence it is that in Zoroastrianism the cock

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1 D. D. Dk. Vol. xiii, P. 12.

2 D. D. Dk. Vol. x Ps. 22 and 23.

3 Vend Chaps. v-x.

4 Vend iii, 26-33.

5 Vend xviii, 16-26.



is held up as a sacred bird and it is declared sinful to kill it.<sup>1</sup> The true Zoroastrian is required by his religion to rise at cock-crow, to be diligent and to work for the welfare of his own self, family, society and for his country. It is clear enough to any man, whether he be a Zoroastrian or not, that there is nothing more destructive to happiness and morality than a rooted habit of idleness. Talent is nothing but crude metal ; industry mints this and gives it its true value. Prayer and work must be linked together. We read in numerous passages of the Zend-Avesta and especially of the Gâthâs that our Prophet and his disciples and other Zoroastrian saints worked hard and diligently, never neglecting at the same time to offer prayers to Ahura-Mazda ; and all this with a view that they might attain the state of perfection.

Zoroastrians from remotest periods prescribed for themselves the rule that whatever a man's intellectual or spiritual destiny be, he should engage himself in some self-supporting business or profession such as that of the priest ( *âthravan* ), the warrior ( *rathishtâr* ), the agriculturist ( *vâstryôsh* ) or of the artisan ( *hûtokhsh* or *hûti* ) so that however it fared with the soul, the body might not starve. But they also laid for themselves the rule that however material a man's life, it should be inspired with some definite spiritual motives so that, however it might fare with the body, the spirit should not starve. Their religion had been to these Zoroastrians their chief source of such inspirations. It sweetened their life, gave them courage and made the greater part of their people happy and contented.

The Zoroastrian Religion befriends healthy and long life in men in so far also that it takes away out of man the worry of temporalities : " If they set their heart in obtaining material wealth, they cannot obtain reverence and honour."<sup>2</sup>

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1 Ibid.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol, vii, 492.

"If the worth of things is inquired into and recognised by a man, certainly he should not take wealth for goodness nor should he praise little wealth and indigence as goodness. Because if worth be taken not according to the goodness or wickedness of a person but according to the great or little wealth then it shall so happen in the world that an ill-natured man of manifold means would in spite of his being depraved, sinful and corrupt, entertain desire for reputation."<sup>1</sup> "Material wealth should be embellished to such an extent that spiritual wealth may not waste away....."<sup>2</sup> "Worthless are the worldly riches because man is mortal....." "Not to connive at a sinner in regard to his sin because of his wealth and power."<sup>3</sup> "Immoderate covetousness of wealth is sinful."<sup>4</sup> "One should not judge the happiness or misery of others by his own standard of wealth and poverty."<sup>5</sup> "Zarathusht spoke thus: 'O Ahura-Mazda, propitious Spirit, Creator of the material world, Righteous Creator! I have seen a celebrity with much wealth, whole soul, infamous in the body, was hungry and in hell and he did not seem to me exalted: and I saw a beggar with no wealth and helpless and his soul was thriving in Paradise and he seemed to me exalted. And I saw a wealthy man without children and he did not seem to me exalted and I saw a pauper with many children and he seemed to me exalted.'<sup>6</sup> However austerities are not the means to take the worry aforesaid out of man. They are neither good in themselves nor are they in conformity with the Zoroastrian Religion.<sup>7</sup> Zoroastrianism does not bid man to forego all pleasures nor does it require him to embrace voluntary poverty, but it requires him to seek pleasures and amusements and keep them within bounds.

The sect of Manichians who in the third century after Christ lived amongst the Zoroastrian subjects of the early

1 D. D. Dk. Vol. x, bk. vi, P. 19.

2 D. D. Dk. Vol. xi, P. 49.

3 D. D. Dk. Vol. xi, Ps. 65 and 71.

4 D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, P. 56.

5 D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, P. 57.

6 Yt. Bahman, Chap. ii, 12 and 13.

7 Vend. iii, 2, 3, 28—33, iv. 44—49; Yt. x, 33 and 77; xvii, 9, 10 and 14; xviii, 1; etc.

Sassanian Kings, refrained from wine, meat and eggs and held marriage to be unlawful ; they did not yet deter themselves from some of the grossest kinds of immorality. In our own times asceticism is prevalent amongst Brahmins, Budhists, Christians and in men of other religions. The Puritans of England imposed all sorts of despotic and cruel laws and restrictions upon themselves and others. The early Methodists with their denunciations of all amusements, dancing, theatres, card-playing and sundry enjoyments were ascetics. The laws of Manu decreed that " The Brahmin should roll himself on the ground or stand during the day on tiptoe or alternately stand and sit. In summer let him expose himself to the heat of fires; during the rainy season let him live under the open sky: and in winter be dressed in wet clothes and thus greatly increase the rigour of his austerities." All these despotic laws and restrictions, these cruel denunciations, and suicidal penances which are practised for the purpose of mortification, are entirely unknown to the Zend-Avesta. To the staunch believer and follower of the true Zoroastrian Religion they seem not only absurd but wicked. According to Zoroastrianism the proper enjoyment of the worldly things which are meant by Nature for his use and delectation, constitutes the chief source of his physical and spiritual strength.<sup>1</sup>

It should at the same time be well remembered that Zoroastrianism does not concern itself primarily with the increase of material prosperity for man. However, it does not condemn the claims on humanity of the temporal life ; what it condemns, is the extravagant estimate which human egotism sets upon them. It condemns indulgence and dissipation which destroy health and happiness and shorten life. It condemns all sorts of wicked pleasure and enjoyment. It forbids men to derive pleasure or enjoyment in cruelty to animals or men. It forbids in its spirit all such games as the bull-fight

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1 Vend. vi, 47 and 48.

or the fight between gladiators and wild beasts such as lions and panthers. In ancient Iran there was no Collosium such as the one that was in ancient Rome where thousands of wild beasts and ten thousands of men were slain and the blood of beasts and men formed not a brook but a river, not a pool but a lake. Our remote Zoroastrian fore-fathers in ancient Iran who were second to none in point of courage, did not seem nor derive fun from the roar of wild beast set to fight, or from the groans of dying gladiators. Amongst our ancestors there never existed the spirit of ruinous amusements and sacrifices which are abroad in the world even to-day, although they take other forms and other shapes. Zoroastrianism forbids all such cruelties and massacres. And it was the influence of the Zoroastrian Religion and the world-wide conquests of the brave Zoroastrian nation who subdued the Greeks and the Romans that gradually checked and stopped such savage cruelties.

Having dealt in the foregoing few pages with the subject of the physical order we shall now proceed to treat of the social order to which man belongs. Man is represented in the Zend-Avesta as a social being. It declares that it is not good for man to be alone ; because society is a great gift from Ahura-Mazda given to man as an important means to help him in the fulfilment of his destiny.

The followers of Zoroaster and his Religion did not sequester themselves from society. No sooner was the Zoroastrian Law ( Daëna ) proclaimed to the assembled people than there sprang up a religious body with the apostles, Zoroaster, Gustâsp, Medhyômâh, Jâmâsp, Farshaoster and others at its head, preaching and teaching laws and precepts. The very heresies, as for instance, the heresy of the Kavis and the Karapans, of the Usigs and the Bandavas of the Avestan times, and the heresies of the Manichians and the Mazdakites of later centuries, show their endeavours to form themselves into separate

societies and sects resembling, however remotely, that very social body from which they seceded.

In the ancient Zoroastrian countries there was the headship of a family or house (nmânô-paiti) of a clan or village (vis-paiti) of a tribe or town (Zantu-paiti), of a nation or country (danghu-paiti).<sup>1</sup> There was also the headship of the Zoroastrian Church. The supreme head of the Church was called Zarathushtra or Zarathushtrôtemô.<sup>2</sup> The object of the headships was essentially to unite all the members in one body, to urge them to the fulfilment of their duties and thus to effect the unity of the social body and to promote the union of its members.

In pre-Zoroastrian times the standing problem amongst mankind was the subordination of the individual to society. It was so even after Zoroaster in countries where Zoroastrianism had not spread. The ideal state according to Plato was one in which the individual was merged as having no independent moral value. In Israel the nation was also an entity in which the individual was content to lose himself. The recognition of the man as an individual is a distinctly Zoroastrian idea. Zoroastrianism was the first to discover and proclaim for the individual his value as a moral responsible creature of Ahura-Mazda and his immortal destiny. In Zoroastrianism the claims of the social organism as well as of the individual were fully upheld for the first time. The Zoroastrian was conscious of no conflict between his own interests and those of the organised society of his fellow Zoroastrians. The great principle of the headship of Zarathushtra or Zarathushtrôtemô implies the individual action and mutual dependence of its followers.

The Religion coming from Ahura-Mazda, the Creator of man, is one essentially social in its nature: "Give me an offspring, wakeful, helpful and supporting, virtuous and

<sup>1</sup> Ys. viii, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ys, vii, 8; viii, 7; etc.

intelligent, ruling and presiding over meetings and assemblies, possessing powers and influence, delivering men from misery and pain, as strong and brave as a hero—an offspring that may promote my family, my clan, my tribe, my country and my religion (danghusastimcha)."<sup>1</sup> This passage and many other passages in our sacred Volume declare that Zoroastrianism is preeminently a social religion, disposing its followers to joint services, awakening the feeling of brotherhood, demanding concerted efforts for its development and diffusion and in a word, combining all believers into organic unity in spirit and in deed.

All the great developments of humanity are fulfilled through society. The first and the last sounds we hear, are human voices. The arms of human beings receive us at birth and deliver us at death. In fact societies encircle our whole existence from birth to death. The happiness experienced in loving and being loved, the resources which we find in the sympathy, sustenance and strength of the home circle, the pleasures of friendly discourse, the great enterprises achieved by the union of thoughts and energies in communities, the light of literature, art and religion transmitted from mind to mind and from age to age, attest the benignant purposes of Ahura in making man a social being. Feelings which sleep within him in solitude, awaken into intense energy, when they find vigorous manifestation in those around him. The best and truest thoughts, the sweetest and the best balanced of thoughts, have come not from those who seek and live in solitude but from the minds of men of society.

Remember that while the above-quoted passage urges us to live a social life, it does not mean what often passes for society. The ordinary intercourse between men in business whose care for one another is limited to their business interests

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1 Ys, lxi, 4 and 5,

merely, and the frivolous meetings and gatherings of what is called fashionable life, these are not true companionship. But true society, as the passage of the Zend-Avesta shows, is that in which man really meets with man, mind with mind, heart with heart. True society means such genuine intercourse between men and men ; it shuns false showy gatherings or concourse.

Let us see what other sublime ideas suggest themselves to us from the sacred passage quoted above about social life ! It tells us that every man is responsible to fellow-men. The responsibility of every individual towards his fellow-men lies, of course, in so far as he has it in his power to help them, either in the exercise of some office which he may hold or by the practice of deeds of kindness or of protection against harm. The quotation above given teaches us that society or community cannot attain its end unless there is recognition on the part of man of common interests and of his duty in furthering such interests for the common weal. Self-preservation is a primary duty but a man's own interests are often most truly served when the interests of others are given preference and importance to. The whole structure of Zoroastrianism rests upon this foundation of common needs and obligations, and its teachings and injunctions can only be rightly understood when the essential solidarity of the human race is recognised right properly.

We read, besides, in this famous passage that society is not number merely ; but is number and union. Number without union would be only isolation. When beings, distinct by individuality, alike by nature, approach and give each other their lives, blend together reciprocally, act upon each other by mutual relations, then there is society true and proper. We are told by the Zend-Avesta in many a passage that such is the state that should obtain among men, and such indeed is also the state among the holy souls and spirits who dwell in Heaven,

Whilst the Zend-Avesta requires us to be social in our habits, it wants us withal to maintain, preserve and promote society. It tells us moreover that only those men and women find a steady support in life who associate social life with the life religious. In other words, Zoroastrianism requires that we should be in constant companionship both with our fellow-men and with our God, Ahura-Mazda.<sup>1</sup> Society cannot be maintained but by a belief in God's power and goodness and such belief is perpetuated only under the guardianship of religious doctrines and observances. No nation or community has been able to exist without the cornerstone of religion. Society and religion though distinct in their sphere, are indissolubly united together, sustaining each other, falling and rising together.

The true Zoroastrian is that man of society who wishes to see home (umâna) change into a street (vîs) and the street into a town (zantu) and the town into a country (danghu);<sup>2</sup> he ardently wishes to see the family developing into a tribe and the tribe into a community and the community into a mighty nation. It is revealing no secret to say that the ancient Zoroastrians were more proud of having large families than of having large estates.<sup>3</sup> Men with larger families enjoyed better position and influence in society and with government. They did not ridicule the notion of having big families as do some of our Parsi parents who confess to a sense of shame rather than of pride at having many children : " With those whom.....desires for other sons have formed, complete progress in the world is connected.....And the birth of many glorious practisers of the religion.....is a benefit of the world.....So when the opponent.....by whom the source of seed and procreation is spoiled, is intent upon a way for the death of progeny.....He who is wasting seed, makes a practice of causing the death of

1 Vend. iii, 2 and 3 and ys, lxii, 4-6.  
2 Ya. lxii, 5.

3 Yt. x, 28 and 38; yt, xxiv, 6 and 34; ys, i, 6.



progeny ; when the custom is completely continuous, which produces an evil stoppage of the progress of the race, the creatures have become annihilated ; and certainly, that action from which, when it is universally proceeding, the depopulation of the world must arise, has become and furthered the greatest wish of Aharman.”<sup>1</sup>

Our present fashionable Parsis not blessed with many children are ashamed as much as to look after the few children that they have. Their fashionable life and habits and their fashionable ideas of morality do hardly allow them time enough to look to the health and training of the only child or two. It may be that once or twice a day is all that they see of their children and that too when they are brought by the nurse for the parents to see. Moreover, these so-called refined and educated Parsi parents in full Malthusian style claim to themselves the right of determining the number of children they shall have. This is a practice that has been borrowed from one of the most abominable vices of the European Society. It is sinful for the Zoroastrian as for any other man or woman to check the growth of their family by the illicit employment of any kind of device. To check such growth is for a Zoroastrian in the light of his religion a crime ; for he or she is a traitor to an all-important stipulation in the marriage contract which should be held sacred by every true believer in Zoroastrianism :—“ If a man come near a damsel .. .....and she conceives by him, let her not, being ashamed of the people, produce in herself the menses against the course of nature by means of water and plants or by means of drugs.....If the man says, ‘Go to the old woman and apply to her for one of her drugs that she may procure the mis-carriage, and if the damsel goes to the old woman and the old woman brings her some drug that kills in the womb and the man says : ‘Cause thy fruit to perish and

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<sup>1</sup> Dd, lxxvii, 6, 8 and 11.

she causes her fruit to perish ; the sin ( of murder ) is on the man, damsel and the old woman.....''<sup>1</sup> " I announce my Yasna to those women who bring forth many sons of many talents..... ''<sup>2</sup> " Frequent repetition of the act of propagating the offspring is an act of great worth and glorious, and it holds a noble and exalted position among other good, superior functions of men ; and therefore they ( men ) should do this act frequently with the view of ensuring the perpetuity of their progeny. Men should form good connection for the purpose of increasing the progeny and should live a harmless virtuous life. And children should be properly brought up.....which entails good care on the part of the parents. It is through the marriage tie that men become related to each other and live contentedly. They remain adherents of the good religion and so no occasion arises for their harbouring wicked jealousy of one another. And they with their children live together in the same abode with affectionate regard for one another and taking a watchful care of their families.''<sup>3</sup>

In almost every Zoroastrian home, borough, town and country of ancient times there were parents conscientious, pious and dutiful who loved and worshiped their God, their religion and their priests, who loved to thrive with virtue and knowledge, who loved to thrive with children, strong in body and mind, who loved to thrive with earthly goods and riches.<sup>4</sup> Thus the Zend-Avesta teaches us that Zoroastrianism makes ample provision for the temporal welfare of man by recognising the nature and the needs of humanity as the true basis of all social order ; by imposing restraint upon human passions and by inculcating upon man need of the spiritual progress of the soul.

Dear Zoroastrians! let me remind you here of one of the principal causes which brought down the ancient Romans

1 Vend xv. 9-14

2 Vispered i, 5,

3 D. P. Dk. ix, Ps 639 and 640.

4 Vend iii, 2 and 3; Ya. lxii, 4-6.

from their high position and purpose. It was the wilful neglect on their part of the sacredness of the marriage contract. In the history of the ancient Romans an age was reached when the indissoluble character of wedded life was utterly ignored, when their duty to the race was regarded by them in the light of an intolerable burden. Thus at last in the reign of Augustus the very highest and the noblest families began dying out for want of heirs whilst the lower orders were desolating whole provinces by their practice of self-inflicted extinction. "We want men," said one of his generals to the great Napoleon. "No" replied the Emperor. "We want mothers." Let our Zoroastrian parents therefore take warning from what we know of the fall and ruin of Rome, from the diminution in number and strength of some of the present European nations and their consequent deterioration due all to their outrages against Nature and against Nature's God.

Zoroastrianism does not forbid carnal desire and indulgence in man in the state of matrimony provided it be within proper and discretional bounds. The holy use of matrimony dishonours neither the soul nor the body. Nor does Zoroastrianism give us the coarse notion that marriage is only for the satisfaction of man's or woman's carnal appetite:—"Every man that has a material body, should regard his own marriage as a good work incumbent on him to perform.....And he should promote the marriages of others."<sup>1</sup> "A woman who keeps herself unsullied, her own person and judgment (unsullied) is a lady, an ornament to her husband and herself protection to home-life."<sup>2</sup> "One should be loving to one's own wife. One ought not to be fond of the lewd ; because the ( pure ) love for the wife is ( thereby ) reduced and besides oneself turns to illicit sexual intercourse who becomes fond of the lewd people."<sup>3</sup> "A virtuous wife is a good helper of enjoyment."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, P. 609.

<sup>2</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. xi, P. 7.

<sup>3</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, Ps. 61 and 62.

<sup>4</sup> Minôî Khirad xiv, 12.

The Zoroastrian Religion declares that a man and a woman by lawfully and permanently uniting and cooperating with each other through marriage ties prove a source of great help in the service of Ahura, Vohuman, and Asha.<sup>1</sup> From the passages in Yasna LIII, and in the Dinkard we learn that marriage is not merely a civil contract but a very ancient divine institution.

According to the Zend-Avesta every contract should be considered solemn. Any one who breaks his contract or promise, is liable to punishment.<sup>2</sup> But the marriage contract is the most solemn of contracts and must be respected by the Zoroastrian ever for life. It is not open to him or her on any account to dissolve it. That it is meant to be indissoluble, can be clearly proved not only by the many excellent doctrines and precepts of the Zoroastrian Religion but also by the form of the marriage ceremonies and by the wording and nature of the blessings showered upon the marrying couple by the officiating priest. Moreover, in the several rites and ceremonies which have come down to us from the remotest Zoroastrian times, and which have been performed for the dead as for the living, the officiating priest always mentions the names of the husband and the wife together ; he never separates them, whether they both be dead or living or one of them only be dead or living. Even after their death the priest, while performing the ceremonies in honour of one of them or both of them, invokes together the fravashis and the holy souls of both the husband and the wife by mentioning their names always together. This is all due to a clean and conclusive belief in every true Zoroastrian that even after death the souls of the husband and the wife are not to separate from each other. Their union and their love for each other last according to this belief for ever.

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<sup>1</sup> Ya, liii, 3 and 4

<sup>2</sup> Vend, iv,

And yet how often do we find men and women of our community making light of the marriage tie than which there is no compact more sacred or binding? We should not be surprised at such looseness of ideal in a man or woman habitually low or vulgar. But how shocking when we find men and women of good birth and breeding ignoring or transgressing the solemn duties which the marriage contract or tie imposes upon them. No sensible man would think that refinement of manners or exquisiteness of taste or superiority of education, profession or position can in any way excuse any kind of transgression or misdemeanour in the wife or the husband.

According to Zoroastrianism a man should have one living wife. In the Zend-Avesta especially in Vs. LIII. where there is an allusion to the marriage of Pouruchisti, the daughter of Zoroaster and in Yt. XVII, 46 and in the Yashts where Hutaosa, the wife of King Gustâsp, has been mentioned, and in numerous other places we find a clear and definite proof that Zoroastrianism never preached, or countenanced or allowed polygamy : " He should godly and piously give in marriage to a pious man a virgin maid whom no man has known at the age of puberty and past fifteenth year."<sup>1</sup> " The friendship of one's ( own ) wife is a virtue whereof the opposite ( is ) adultery."<sup>2</sup> " As far as possible ( unless through urgent necessity ) a woman should not wed a second husband, nor a man a second wife because such act is not a meritorious one."<sup>3</sup> " If any one tries with evil intent to sever the matrimonial tie, complaint should be lodged ( in a court of justice ), with the view of obtaining state interference in the matter ; and if then in accordance with the judgment he reaccepts the conjugal relationship, he should in no way be punished with imprisonment."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Vend xiv, 15

<sup>2</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, p. 43

<sup>3</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, p. 636-639.

<sup>4</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, p. 639

The authors of the Zend-Avesta speak of the family and social life of the ancient Zoroastrians and as they do so, they clearly indicate that in the ancient Zoroastrian family, there was only one master or head (nmânô-paiti) and only one mistress (nmânô-pathni) of the house. And they both were equal in power, rank and position in their family. The mistress could in case of need or emergency perform even religious rites and ceremonies.<sup>1</sup> From the facts contained in the Zend-Avesta relating to the domestic, social, moral and spiritual life of true Zoroastrians in ancient Iran it can easily be seen and proved that our remote ancestors who were far advanced in science and civilization, were perfect monogamists; that whilst they preferred and practised monogamy, they hated and condemned polygamy.<sup>2</sup>

The ancient civilized Zoroastrians perfectly understood that real happiness for a man was to be found in his union with the soul of one who shared every joy and sorrow of his as it came. They understood that mutual love and mutual respect ought to exist between husband and wife and that each should act so as to ensure the fulfilment of the matrimonial obligation. As I have said above, with the early Zoroastrians the husband was the head of the household; it was for him to rule; yet he took care to exercise his prerogative in the spirit of Zoroastrian charity. "He is a delightful husband who is sweet-tongued, gives much happiness, is harmless, full of resources, highly skilled in the arts,..... and a giver of other well-known comforts; is a remover of injurious and hurtful things,.....and a rejecter of the customs of (other) people. ...." <sup>3</sup> "Any command, whatever the husband orders, it is requisite to go about that day. Certainly, without the leave of the husband she is to do no work, so that the lord may be

<sup>1</sup> Erpatistan Avesta Frag. Part 1,6.

<sup>3</sup> D. P. Dk. vol, ii, p. 101

<sup>2</sup> My present volume Chap. ii,  
p. 81-83 foot-notes.

pleased with the wife,.....so that every time that they perform work by command of the husband, they call them righteous in the religion.....''<sup>1</sup> "The wife of one's choice should always be treated with much affection and with liberality in the conferring of favours. She should be made sharer in the recompense for righteous deeds."<sup>2</sup> Thus, then, as we have seen above, one of the first things which the Zoroastrian Religion achieved when it came into existence, was to destroy the shackles of woman's serfdom. In ancient Iran when the Zoroastrian Religion had been dominant, woman's condition was in various ways uplifted and improved as she herself was held up for man's honour and esteem. It was Zoroastrianism that first raised woman to the level of man. It would be interesting here to compare this position of the ancient Zoroastrian woman with the condition of the woman in lands where Zoroastrianism had not made its appearance and with women in primitive times, as for instance, in Egypt, Turkey, Arabia, China, India and in other countries of the world in which women were treated as brutes.

Numerous are the passages that we can quote from the Zend-Avesta and the history of ancient Iran to show that in Zoroastrian homes of ancient Iran there was to be met with such splendor of womanly character, of wife'y, motherly, sisterly, daughterly devotion as the world had never seen before the age of Zoroaster,\* such as it never saw even after it in any other country or clime. In the ancient Zoroastrian family the wife exercised the most supreme and wholesome of influence.

In the Zoroastrian house of ancient Iran which was considered as the nucleus of the Zoroastrian society the parents were under the obligation of bringing up their children to a pious standard of living. They longed and prayed to Heaven

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1 Saddar lix, 3—5

2 D. P. Dk. vol. ix. p. 637.

for children, strong in body, intelligent and virtuous, useful to their society and country.<sup>1</sup> And they tried to train their children as such by their own good example and by good lessons in morality and religion. The home life of the ancient Zoroastrian was the school of virtue and the practical field for its continual display. The husband and the wife fostered a spirit of true piety in each other and they both desired and fostered that spirit in their children. And, as we read in Vendîdâd III, 2—3 and in other Scriptural passages, the Zoroastrian Religion was not above including within man's sphere of life due care for the legitimate interests and concerns of this temporal life; on the contrary, it specifically enjoins as man's proper duty.

In ancient Iran the priest (âthravan), the soldier (rathishtâr), the tiller (vâstryosh), the artisan (hûtokhsh); were the great four pillars of the ancient Zoroastrian society. The priest by his spiritual services, the tiller by his plough, the soldier by his sword, and the artisan by his art, preserved and promoted the well-being of society. There is not the least doubt that the priest was allotted among others the most honourable position in ancient Iran.

“The dignity of the head in the human body is allotted to the profession of the Athravans (Priests): of the hand to the Vâstryosh (Agriculturists) and of feet to the Hûtokhsh; thus it is symbolically shown that in rank and dignity the profession of the Athravans is as the head of the world.”<sup>2</sup> “The superiority and the superior dignity of Athravanship over Rathæstârship and Vâstrayoship are known for many reasons. One reason is that Rathæstârship and Vâstrayoship are included in priestship. The Athravan fights against the druj. He conveys the soul in the presence of God. Another reason is that the acquisition of knowledge is through

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1 Ys, lxii, 4-6.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. 1, P. 37



the Athravan. He teaches the duties towards God and teaches to distinguish the deeds of righteousness from sins."<sup>1</sup>

"The duties of Athravanship are: To approve of the worship of God, to instruct the people in it, to explain the commands of the Religion, to give decisions in religious matters and to cure diseases of the body and the soul of man."<sup>2</sup>

"Therefore religious teachers (priests) who do not even perform some of the work of religion to guide people in this manner, and who are without a regular knowledge of the religion, ought to be removed for want of knowledge."<sup>3</sup> "The physicians both of soul and body versed in the good religion should be under the control of the high physician of the soul, the priest of priests of Zoroastrians which high priest should be pure of disposition, possessed of natural ability, an adorer of the religion, one who remembers God, believes in Ahura-Mazda, perceives the soul, recites the true Avesta, understands its meaning, is of indubitable conduct, high of thought, large of heart, a destroyer of perverse thought giving immediate orders for the punishment of sinners, making appropriate gifts to those worthy of the reward and portion of virtue and a supporter of those obedient to Ahura-Mazda.....Further more he should be one who points out (the path to) salvation and gives right decision as between the sovereign and the subject. A true Dastur (high priest) is able, through wealth of all kinds and adequate income to preserve the lustre and aims of the religion and to issue all commands pertaining to the religion and to bring them into force."<sup>4</sup> "The best sovereign in this world is he who has faith in the high-priest of the good religion of this world which embodies the wisdom of Ahura-Mazda,.....that resembles Ahura-Mazda in will, whose world desire is to make his people immortal.....Next to him in the world stands

1 D. P. Dk. vol. i, P. 36

2 D. P. Dk. vol. ii, Ps. 72 and 73

3 D. P. Dk. ii, p. 106

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, Ps. 225—226,

the high-priest, that is the wisest among mankind.....”<sup>1</sup>

Now let the reader compare the exalted condition and position of the former Zoroastrian priests and head priests of whom the sacred authors of the Zend-Avesta speak, with the starving, miserable, pitiable and disgraceful condition of the present-day Parsi priesthood, with the condition of even our few educated and qualified priests and head-priests, the condition which has been exposing our community to the ridicule and derision of all non-Zoroastrian races and also of our ruling nation. By such comparison he will be able to judge, ascertain and determine how far the Parsis have really advanced in civilization ; how far they are entitled to be called enlightened and educated ; how much of ignorance, want of sound education, how much of appreciative power and of discipline is there in the community which boasts of being the leading community amongst all the different races of India !

I remember that a few years ago the late Professor Moulton, the Iranian scholar, had been in Bombay to deliver lectures on Zoroastrian subjects. During his stay in Bombay he was requested by some imprudent Parsis to suggest some means for improving the Parsi priesthood. The professor first expressed his surprise at the request, saying that it was a social question or matter and so the Parsis themselves could solve it better than a Christian foreigner or stranger like himself. However, after having made minute inquiries and having received information through his Parsi learned and well-experienced friends he gave his following candid opinion : “ According to the universal and natural law of supply and demand there can be no supply of educated and well-qualified priests and head priests until there be real and sincere demand for them in the Parsi community. From the bad way in which the very few

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol vi, Ps 22 and 23

educated and qualified priests and head priests are neglected, treated, provided and supported, and from the undesirable condition in which they are left to linger, it is quite evident that there is no real and sincere demand for them. Under the present circumstances of the Parsis with the imperfect training, education, manners, and customs they should never expect, nor hope for in near future a good supply of intelligent, learned, holy priests and head priests " From my own knowledge and long personal experience as a head-priest I would give the same opinion. The rare instances in which we find that intelligent, clever and educated young men have preferred to follow and practise their forefather's profession, are frightening enough to drive their intelligent and educated sons and descendants out of their hereditary occupation.

But it should be well borne in mind that there had rarely been an epoch in which the necessity of worthy priesthood as a unit in the human order was not powerfully recognised. Doubtless, the liberty which men enjoy, gives birth in them to all sorts of blunders; but they have happily never committed so signal an error as to destroy the institution of priesthood as such, indispensably necessary as it is to the social order of the human race. Priesthood in fact is in the natural order of things and that which is in the natural order of things, must not be changed or ever destroyed.

Having examined and discussed all the statements contained in the Zend-Avesta in regard to man's nature, it is natural to ask : with what aim and purpose Ahura-Mazda has created him with such a nature ; what must be the ultimate aim and end of man ?.

No doubt, the Zend-Avesta represents man's nature as being mainly spiritual and teaches that this spiritual nature has been vouchsafed by Ahura-Mazda upon man in order that he may look beyond and above material things. It teaches that the true work, the true aim and end of man must be mainly

spiritual :—"A friend of the spiritual beings is that one who, whatsoever meritorious actions he performs, performs for the sake of the spiritual beings and who seeks the good reward from the spiritual and from the earthly beings."<sup>1</sup> "It is obligatory on every one to over-power the Druj whereby happens the cessation of opposition from Angra-man and the purity of the creatures."<sup>2</sup> "The creatures are created for justice and performance of what is desirable for the Creator and to prepare thoroughly well that which is an unlimited and vigorous progress of the creatures, the unparalleled renovation of the Universe. "The sight of Ahura-Mazda is the goal of all pious souls. "A soul of the righteous steps forth into Heaven through the strength of the spirit of good works."<sup>3</sup> So according to these quotations the state of felicity to which man is destined, is peculiarly his own and it harmonises with the nature that Ahura-Mazda has bestowed on him : with his intellect, conscience, will and other faculties, spiritual and physical : "The boon that has been destined for him, comes to him (man) through his own active merit. He loses his glory through his own fault. If evil has been destined for him, he can repel it through his own active merit."<sup>4</sup> Hence we see that there is nothing like fatalism in regard to man's own active actions, in regard to man's righteousness or wickedness.

Now let us inquire : What was the great motive that prompted our holy Gâthic poets and our ancient Zoroastrian saints to the study of Nature and of man ? Why did they work with such diligence and spend their lives in daily and nightly studies ? Why did they devote their best energies and powers to a profound study of the human soul ? For Truth ! The search after truth had been the great aim and end of their life of toil. Theirs was an unconquerable thirst for knowledge, for a comprehension of the Order and Beauty of creation as a whole."<sup>5</sup>

1 D. D. Dk. Vol. xiii, P. 2.

2 D. D. Dk. Vol. xiii, P. 3.

3 Dd. Vii, 2; xxxi, 4, xxxi, 6.

4 Avestan Fragments Vend v, 7,  
Pahl. Commentary.

5 Ys. xlv, 1-20.

They sought truth in the Universe as well as in man. They devoted the best part of their contemplation to the study of the human soul as constituting the most important subject of human thought. They believed that the study of the soul was the greatest work of man's life. So they studied the soul as well as the Universe and found in them the immutable truths, the immutable principles and ideas about God and man, about life and society. They always sought truth wherever they could find it and proclaimed it so that they themselves as well as their fellow-men might live in the light of truth, might attain spiritual perfection and enjoy perfect peace and prosperity in this and in the next world.

Dear reader ! the names which we, Zoroastrians, pronounce in terms of the most affectionate homage, are those of the great saints and men of ancient Iran who have left enduring traces of themselves in the memories and hearts of men of all succeeding generations and who shall ever be thought of wherever a Zoroastrian lives, with a spontaneous overflow of love and honour. No names shall ever be dearer to a Zoroastrian's heart than of Zarathushtra Spitama, Hvôvt, Gustâsp, Hutaosa, Medhyô-mâh, Frashaoaster, Jâmâsp, Arde-shir, Shâpur, Ohoesrôe, Tôsar, Ardâvîrâf, Aderbâd Mâhrespend, Neryôsang Dhaval and others who lived and died for humanity. Their noblest aim and effort and their greatest sacrifices were all for good principles and great ideals, for truth, freedom and the salvation of man. Zoroastrian men and women of all ranks and conditions of life shall ever preserve and cherish in the heart of their hearts the hallowed memory of such good and great souls as we have mentioned above. In our sacred and secular literature, in our religious rites and ceremonies, in our prayers and festivals we are in duty bound to keep alive their names and their good deeds, show our gratitude and offer our thanks for their life-long struggle for the Great Cause of Ahura-Mazda and of Asha,

## CHAPTER V.

### ZOROASTRIAN ESCHATOLOGY.

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In this chapter we shall deal with what is last and final in regard to man; we shall speak and discuss on the authority of our Zoroastrian Scriptures about death and what happens to man's soul after death. Every sensible man desires to know what is going to become of him after death. If a sensible sober person were to tell me that he had no interest in his future existence, I would tell him that I did not believe him. Every person is and must feel interested in the question of future existence. In fact, man will never cease taking interest in this all important subject, for it is the interest of life itself.

It may be maintained that religion is more profitably employed when it is associated with efforts of social reform than when it reflects on man's destiny hereafter. It is a fact all the same that if we discard the vital connection between our faith and our eternal future, we dwarf and impoverish both the religion that we believe in and the human life to which we try to minister. Undue interest in the value of earthly life has its dangers and disadvantages. There would indeed be loss of the unrest and disappointment which too often characterise and impede workers in the cause of social reform, if they were able to realize that for man there is a larger hope than this, present life affords. We must, therefore, keep before our minds eye a clear conception of this aspect of religion which is one of primary and commanding interest.

According to the Zend-Avesta though the body ceases to exist, the soul lives and is unhindered. The dead are not

dead. Blessed is death. Death is the good transference to a superior world, the world which is never fickle, never too hot, never too cold, never too light, never too dark. So one of the grandest and mightiest mercies of God is the Divine permission to man to quit this earth. "May they (the Gathas) be to us the abundant givers of rewards for our righteousness in the world beyond the present, after the separation of our consciousness from the body."<sup>1</sup> "Not for his soul shall the two spirits struggle with each other and when it enters Heaven, the stars, the moon, the sun (and all) shall rejoice in his presence: and I, Ahura-Mazda shall also rejoice, saying: 'Welcome, O man! thou who hast just left the decaying world and hast entered into the undecaying one.'"<sup>2</sup> "Not until the dust of the corpse mingles with the dust of the earth....."<sup>3</sup> "If a man bring a nasu-burning fire to the Dâityô-gâtu, what shall be his reward when his soul has separated from his body."<sup>4</sup> "What shall be his reward after the separation of his soul from his body who has cleansed from the nasu the man defiled by the dead. 'Ahura-Mazda answered: The welfare of Paradise thou canst promise to that man for his reward in the other world.'"<sup>5</sup> "Whoever shall smite a shepherd's dog or his soul when passing to the other world, shall fly howling louder and more sorely grieved than the sheep in the lofty forest where the wolf ranges."<sup>6</sup> "In the end the body is mingled with the dust and reliance is on the soul."<sup>7</sup> "Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through life; for death comes upon thee at last; the dog and the bird lacerate the corpse and the perishable part (body) falls to the ground."<sup>8</sup> "Because of the absence in man of the unrighteous splendor.....his future life is exempted from affliction."<sup>9</sup> "The departure of such a spirit from the organic

1 Ys lv, 2

2 Vend vii, 52,

3 Vend vii, 50,

4 Vend. viii, 81.

5 Vend ix, 43 and 44.

6 Vend. xiii, 8

7 Minô: Khirad i, 22.

8 Minô: Khirad ii, 110—1113.

9 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 278.

power of Gayômarđ was due to the entrance of the Blemish-giver. Moreover it was on account of the exit of the soul from the body that the power of life and speech died away. So long as the animate organic person of Gayômarđ lived in purity, his power of life and speech existed."<sup>1</sup> Thus, then, by natural death the Zend-Avesta understands the separation of the soul from the body and the dissolution of the latter into its component parts. The material body wears, declines, crumbles and becomes dust ultimately. The spiritual soul uses it no longer and leaves it until the time of Ristâkhêz (Resurrection) comes for it to recover its body.

According to the Zend-Avesta life and death have been on the face of this globe since the beginning of the living creatures. Gayômarđ, the first man, was subject to and met with death. Every living organism is faced with law of death. We are wont to imagine that Nature is all full of life. In reality it is all full of death. One cannot say Nature helps plant or animal to live on indefinitely. Examine the nature fully, say, of a plant and you have to admit that its natural tendency is to die. The very sun, the rain, the air which nourish it, make it decay and die. The law which holds for the plant-world is also valid for animals and men. We can see from the Vendîdâd and other books that it is ordained by Ahura-Mazda for men to die. All men must die : " On this earth of the seven regions there is somebody going to die, every body ought to think : ' Perhaps it is I '. Had he sense enough to know that every creature that has been created and has had existence, shall die and that the unseen deceiving Demon, Astovidhâtu (Demon of death) comes for every one....." <sup>2</sup> No man, whether he be a saint or a sinner, is exempted from disease and death. We read in our Book that our most holy Prophet Zoroaster as well as the greatest sinner, King Azhi Dahâk (Zohâk) were subject

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk, Vol, v, P. 335,

<sup>2</sup> S. B. E, Vol, iv, P. 377,



alike to disease and death. Man, though he little thinks of it, carries about with him the seeds of decay in his constitution just as iron generates its rust, wood its worm and cloth its moth : "How is it that a man can wish for another mortal the annihilation of his body or of his soul or death for his children if he has sense enough to know that he himself is mortal....." Every day the living body is thrown for food to the birds that fly in the empty sky....."Astovidhōtu has been created for the destruction of the mortals.....from whom not one of mortal men can escape ; no one has escaped to this day and no one will escape hereafter.....Neither Athravans, nor chiefs of countries, neither well-doers, nor evil-doers. Neither those who run up like Kâus with all his strength and kingly glory, could escape from Astōvidhōtu, nor those like Afrāsyāb, the Turk. Nor he who dug this wide round earth like Dahāk, who went from the East to the West searching for immortality and did not find it ....To every one comes the unseen Daēva Astōvidhōtu who accepts neither compliments nor bribe, who is no respecter of persons and ruthlessly makes men perish..... The ox turns to dust, the valiant strong man turns to death ; the bodies of all men mingle with the dust. What does not mingle with the dust, is the Ashem-vohū which a man recites in this world and the alms-giving to the holy and righteous... ..If there were or could be any escape from death, the first of the world, Gayōmard (would have escaped).....when death came over him, he delivered up his body and could not struggle with death ; and said : "aogemaidêkâ, usmahikâ, visāmadaêkâ = We come, rejoice and submit."<sup>1</sup>

No doubt, as our sacred Volume points out, the grant from God of mortal existence to soul is a boon ; however its prolongation is a great blessing. The true Zoroastrian is required by his religion to take all possible care of his life and to take all manner of precautions for the combined health of his

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1 S. B. E. Vol. iv, Ps. 377, etc,

body and soul. The man who causes injury or discomfort or pollution to his self, that is, to his body or soul, no matter in how so little a way through the neglect of the laws or precepts which Zoroastrianism prescribes, is considered liable to punishments and the punishments are prescribed for him.<sup>1</sup> No student or follower of Zoroastrianism can imagine that in a religion so glorious as of Zoroaster there could be anything else prescribed for the crimes of suicide and murder than the severest condemnation and punishment. According to Zoroastrianism man is as responsible for his own life as for the life of others.<sup>2</sup>

Though Zoroastrianism decries the crime of self-destruction, suicides are not uncommon within our community. And what is the cause of it, if not due to utter ignorance of their religion on the part of the majority of our people as also to infidelity and agnosticism, which are getting prevalent amongst the higher and the lower classes of our community. If Parsis do believe sincerely and faithfully, as they are bound to, what Zoroastrian Religion preaches that there is a life hereafter and that such a life is blissful with reference to how we live and how we die, then, unless one is demented and is therefore irresponsible, there can never be a case of suicide amongst them.

A man in London once happened to hear Robert Owen deliver his infidel lecture on Socialism and on reaching home is said to have sat down and written these words : "The Bible is the greatest possible deception," and then to have shot himself. David Hume wrote these words : "It would be no crime for me to divert the Nile or the Danube from its natural bed. Where, then, can be the crime in my directing a few drops of blood from their ordinary channel ?" And having written the essay he lent it to a friend ; the friend read it, wrote a letter of thanks and admiration and shot himself. Rousseau, Voltaire, Gibbon were apologetic for self-immolation ; and they were

<sup>1</sup> See, Vendidad.

<sup>2</sup> Vend. iii, 41 and D, D, Dk. Vol. xii, P. 67.

infidels all. Infidelity sees no wrong in people's expediting wilfully their egress from out this world. Infidelity teaches that it makes no difference as to how man lives here or goes out of this world; he will land either in an oblivious nowhere or a glorious some-where. If infidelity had its own, if only it could persuade men that it made no difference as to how they departed from this world, there would be quite a myriad of men dying hourly by their own hands.

In olden times in places where Zoroastrianism had not spread, suicide was considered honourable and indicative of courage. Demosthenes poisoned himself when told that Alexander's ambassador had demanded the surrender of the Athenian orators. Isocrates killed himself rather than surrender to Philip of Macedon. Cato rather than submit to Julius Caesar took his own life and after his wounds had been dressed, he tore them three times open and perished. Mithridates killed himself rather than submit to Pompey, the conqueror. Hannibal, when he considered life unbearable, destroyed himself by poison from his ring. After the disaster of Moscow Napoleon always carried with him a preparation of opium. One night his servant heard the ex-emperor arise, saw him put something in a glass and drink it; his groans soon after aroused the attendants and it was through the utmost medical skill he was resuscitated from his stupor.

Times have since changed; yet cases of suicide have been very frequent in recent years. Frustrated affection, domestic troubles, loss of fortune, disgraceful exposure, impatience, anger, remorse, envy, jealousy, destitution, misanthropy, have been held sufficient causes now-a-days for absconding from this life. The evil is spreading onwards, and is due to total disregard of the wholesome principles and precepts such as our Zoroastrian Religion offers.

The true Zoroastrian is enjoined to dread, condemn and shirk from an end which is unnatural, premature or violent.

However he has to remember that life is hard and burdensome, beset with difficulties, trials and temptations so that often times do we say to ourselves: "Would I were dead." If he remembers this, he may picture death as an angel coming to relieve him. While this world is appropriate as a temporary halting stage, as an eternal residence it would be a horror. No sentence would be too dreadful for man than that he should be doomed to remain here for but a thousand years.

But supposing a man while he lives is as happy and successful and illustrious as could be, can he ever tell, whether death at a later period would prove more to his advantage than death at an earlier period? Historians have affirmed in the case of Pompey the Great that he would have ranked as the most successful and glorious of men if only he had died ten years earlier. What fate was the happier for Alexander? Was it that he vanquished Darius, that he overcame Porus, that he dictated laws to the Indians? It was his fate that he died young in life. Had he only survived a little longer, it is held unquestionable that, since soon after his death the West was arming itself in opposition against the East, he would have forfeited his splendid title of the "Great". So the lesson impressed on our mind by the Zend-Avesta that natural death should be welcomed, that it should be embraced without any wailing or weeping, is one which is confirmed by our experience and history. At the time when he is about to leave this world, a true Zoroastrian is urged by his religion to rejoice, because of the prospect of entering Heaven and living an eternal life.

As we have seen in the last chapter, numerous statements of the Zend-Avesta tend to prove that the belief that there was no death in this world in the beginning, is merely a speculation. It should however be well borne in mind that this fact does not upset the teaching of our holy Book, viz.

that it is sin that makes death what it is to our experience and gives death a character which otherwise it would not have. It is the sting of sin that hastens death. Sin has brought disease and death into the world. Sin has a powerful potentiality to accelerate the approach of disease and death and to bring them about long before they otherwise would come. It is man's blasphemies, his infidelity, falsehood, lies, frauds, pride, ingratitude and other vices that cause his death to come before its time. Through the gluttonous excesses by which he overloads his stomach; the unbridled licentiousness by which he impairs his vital energy; the idu'gence in bad language by which he creates enmity; the mortifications of envy and the cares of ambition and by such other irregularities, by excesses and deficiencies which cause man to commit sins, he brings on himself premature death. These are truths supported and confirmed by many a passage of the Zend-Avesta, especially Vendidâd I and II and Yasht XIX. According to Zoroastrianism it is not the fasting from food but it is the fasting from sin that prolongs life and keeps away disease and death: "It is requisite to abstain from the keeping of fasts. For, in our religion it is not proper that they should not eat every day anything, because it would be a sin not to do so. With us the keeping of fast is this that we keep fast from committing sin with our eyes and tongue and ears and hands and feet. Some people are striving about it so that they may not eat anything all day and they practise abstinence from eating anything. For us it is also necessary to make an effort so that we may not think or speak or commit any sin; and it is necessary that no bad action should proceed from our hands, or tongue or ears or feet, which would be a sin owing to them. Since I have spoken in this manner and have brought forward the fasting of the seven members of the body, which in other religions is fasting owing to not eating....."<sup>1</sup>

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1 Saddar. S. B. E. Chap lxxxi.

We have already seen the views of the Zend-Avesta on the nature of death. If the body is no longer adapted to be the medium of life, man perishes and dies. † Once bereft of life the body becomes subject to the laws governing inanimate nature. To dissolve and dispose of the component parts of the body the Zend-Avesta prescribes the best possible method, the best from scientific, sanitary and material points of view.<sup>1</sup>

Now let us study the other component part of man the soul. According to Zoroastrianism the soul with all its tremendous faculties lives on after death. It is superior to all material things. It is essentially independent of the body, and when at death medical skill fails, it throws aside the body as an abode unfit for habitation and departing from it, it goes beyond this world, beyond the stars, the moon, the sun and the chasm of immensity. No fire can consume it; no floods drown it; no rocks crush it; no time can ever exhaust it.

When we consider the intellectual heights which the Zoroastrian saints attained in their contemplations, we cannot refrain from a feeling of wonder. They willed to know everything above, below, and around them. Earth, sea, heaven and all its luminaries, had all been well observed and studied. Their observations and experience revealed to them facts, and facts led them to causes and laws. But this was not all. This visible world could hardly satisfy the craving of their intelligence for knowledge or give repose to their hearts. So, they soared higher and yet higher; and asked themselves what there could be beyond this world, the stars, the moon, and the sun; and meditating they replied: "The Infinite Ahura-Mazda!" They thought further and exercised their intelligence for truth about their soul and its destiny. They asked for themselves: "Is the soul perishable in nature? If not, where does it go on leaving the body? What is the destination where kins-

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† Vendidad Chapt m-x.

men and friends go ; where do they await the return of us living ?” These questions in regard to the soul were studied so minutely and profoundly and solved in such a masterly way by the Zoroastrian saints and sages that no enlightened and impartial scholar versed in spiritual knowledge, would look at their solutions with indifference or reject them.

The mind is the remote principle of our actions, the will is their immediate principle ; the mind sees, the will commands, man acts. Now, to act is to produce something. Man never moves but to produce. But why does he produce ? What does he see in that incessant production which is the effect of his activity ? What he seeks, is life. If he breathes, it is to live ; if he walks, it is to live ; if he sleeps, it is to live ; if he dies, it is to live. Yes, in the truth of our destinies death is the high road to life.

Death according to the Zend-Avesta is the entrance into another and a new world. Death is the entering upon that unchanging lot which man has wrought out for himself here below. Our Book emphasises the fact that this world is, so to say, the waiting room where man prepares for the journey to a distant country. “So to call death the cause of life is for this reason that through death life is to be rendered worthy of happiness in the next world or that death is the cause of the perfection of life.....”<sup>1</sup> “When man in this animate organic frame is actually on the side of his own soul, he is immortal in purity in this worldly life.....”<sup>2</sup> “.....The long life belonging to the soul, whereby permanency (unending existence) is possible through a healthy career.”<sup>3</sup>

The Zend-Avesta declares a superterrestrial existence, it teaches spiritual existence in the doctrine of angels and arch-angels (Yazatas and Amesha-spentas) ; yea, it teaches about the

1 D. P. Dk. Vol. 7, P. 330.  
2 Ibid. P. 335.

3 Ibid. P. 339.

very being of God, Ahura-Mazda. Besides all this it teaches that it is the soul in man that never dies: "Be it known that the duration of the soul is everlasting... The powerful spiritual substances that work with the soul for existence, are likewise eternal..... Hence it is that the rational animate being will exist for ever."<sup>1</sup> "As to that which is asked by thee concerning the spiritual and worldly existences, the worldly existence is, in the end, death and disappearance and of the spiritual existence, in the end, that of a soul of the righteous is undecaying, immortal and undisturbed, full of glory and full of enjoyment for ever and everlasting, with Angels (Yazatas) and Arch-angels (Amshaspendas) and the fravashis of the righteous....."<sup>2</sup> "Praise to Thee, O Fire! mayst Thou come to us..... Grant us Weal and Deathlessness."<sup>3</sup> "Who destroys the body of the immortal soul. May the immortal soul have its share in Heaven."<sup>4</sup>

Zoroastrianism is a perpetual assertion of the moral purpose of the relations between man and the unseen world, the spiritual world. It is a revelation of that regarding God and Heaven whereby man may grow braver, stronger, better and purer. It is moral power that the spiritual world exerts upon our human life. The knowledge that the unseen world is moral, must bring strength and clearness to the moral life of any human being who apprehends that truth.

In the Zoroastrian Scriptures we have not the hesitating notes which speak only of a certain presentiment of Immortality, we have no mere suggestions of the probability of eternal life; but we have the assurance firm and final of Immortality. We must admit however that this assurance comes only to those who are already convinced of the truth of Zoroastrianism. Apart from that it is impossible to be made perfectly sure of the life everlasting.

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1 D. P. Dk Vol. v, P. 301.

2 Minôî Khurd xl, 29 and 30.

3 Ys. lviii, 7.

4 Aogemaide S. B. E. Vol. iv, P. 373.



It can never be denied that above every one the clear thought of Immortal Life first sprang in Zoroaster and developed itself in his disciples and successors. From that thought a strong deep current, ceaseless and irresistible, has flowed through humanity, leading men to believe in the immortality of the soul. As long as this world shall exist, this persistent belief in a life after death will continue to hold its ground. It was Zoroaster who first brought to light the doctrines of the Future Life, of the Resurrection ( Rastâkhêz ) and Renovation ( Frashôkereti ) They were obscurely present in the minds of men and in the religions before Zoroaster. But they were practically unrevealed until the Great Iranian Prophet appeared and revealed in their perfection his mature and elaborate beliefs.

From the followers of Zoroaster, these beliefs were appropriated by the Hebrews and imported into their sacred Book, called the Old Testament. These doctrines were next borrowed by the New Testament, the Bible, from the Old Testament and yet Christians, oblivious of their true origin credit the Hebrews with having introduced the doctrines of the Future Life and the Resurrection into their own religion.

The Old Testament maintains an all-round silence in regard to the future life. One feels it quite specially in the hopeless wail that sounds through many a psalm: " In death there is no remembrance of Thee: in Sheol who shall give Thee thanks." <sup>1</sup> There is neither comfort nor moral significance in the thought of the Hebrew Sheol. Sheol conveys no idea to the mind except that of being a place where the departed exist but in which, so far as can be judged, the personality of the soul has been feebly left quite untouched. The Hebrew did not associate either bliss or misery, but only the thought of bare existence in the unseen world. The conception of sinful souls being tormented in Sheol was a later

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Ps. iv, 4.

one. But the dreariest idea connected with the Hebrew Sheol is that in it all association with God as well as with the other world is cut off. It is the place where fellowship with God ceases, where the dead cannot praise Him.

There is a remarkable coincidence between the Hebrew Sheol and the Hades of the early Greek literature. As in the case of Sheol all go without difference or distinction to Hades, Agamemnon and Achilles with their meanest slaves, there to eke out the same gloomy existence. The early Hebrew doctrines of Future Life is as fragmentary, inconsistent and barren of hope, as divorced from vital spiritual interest as is the early Hellenic doctrine.

It has been frequently observed by scholars that the true ideas of Future Life and Immortality had not entered the Hebrew religion before the breaking up of the Jewish State and the Exodus. The clearest utterances of Hebrew writers about the doctrine date from a period later in the Exile and the captivity of the Jews in Babylon. The obscurity of this doctrine in the early ages of Hebrew history shows itself in the text of their sacred book:—"Behold! the righteousness shall be recompensed in the earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner."<sup>1</sup> This quotation shows that retribution must according to the Hebrews take place within the compass of this life. This goes far to explain the limitation of the Hebrew hope. In this explanation do we find that the early Hebrew psalmist could not see beyond the horizon of this life.

In the earlier Jewish writings the Future Life was overlooked. It is only the later Hebrew poets who have anything to say about the hope of individual immortality based upon the sense of personal relation to God. By the consent of many scholars the most distinctive utterance of a Hebrew psalmist regarding immortality is to be found in the 16th. psalm

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<sup>1</sup> Prov. xi, 31.

which teaches that those who are in perfect fellowship with God, shall not die. In the 17th psalm the singer says. "As for me I will behold Thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness. In the 49th and the 73rd psalms the psalmists utter: "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for he shall take me. 'Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel and afterwards take me to glory.'" The most significant passage in Job XIX 25—27, is that in which we read. "I know that my Redeemer liveth and in after-time will stand upon the earth and after my skin which is destroyed—this here even without my flesh shall I see God."

From these utterances it will be seen that the assertion of Immortality on the part of individual Hebrew writers took the form of a demand for a continuous life. But the protest against the fact of death or the demand for a future life is found late in the history of Hebrew literature after the Hebrews had come into contact with the Zoroastrians. And, it was after this contact that not only the idea of a corporate resurrection of Israel but of individual Israelites too, came to be embodied in the Old Testament. Hence it is that the New Testament, Christianity which is the direct descendant of the Old Testament, the Hebrew Religion, is indirectly indebted for the ideas of Life and Immortality which together constitute the Christian doctrine of Resurrection to our Zoroastrian Scriptures.<sup>1</sup>

To Zoroaster and his immediate disciples the soul was immortal from its very nature. Such was the idea of Immortality in which they were interested. They laid deep stress on man's distinctive hope of Immortality. They had such a firm grasp of the doctrine of Immortality that we cannot but admire them when we remember that to them Immortality was not

<sup>1</sup> T K. Cheyne M. A. D. D. Oriel  
Profesoor of the interpretation of  
Holy Scripture, Canon of Roche-

ster, "Origin and Religious contents of the Psalter," Ps. 267, 270, 281, 282, 390-401 and 422.

one of secondary and inferential elements of religious experience but a primary and essential conviction of the belief in Ahura-Mazda.

History provides with a conspicuous contrast in this connection. Socrates, the Athenian teacher, discussed the question of immortality with his disciples ; and though he asserted the likelihood of a life to come, it was all the same a subject for discussion between him and his disciples. But with Zoroaster and his disciples Immortality was no unsettled question and therefore they had no discussion on the subject between them. Zoroaster and his immediate disciples boldly imbued as they were with deep conviction, took upon themselves to impart the truth to friends and foes alike. They declared at once with a tone of authority and under profound sense of confidence and responsibility. The Great Prophet of Iran claimed to be the Teacher appointed by Ahura-Mazda to announce that great truth about eternal life ; whereas the dying words of Socrates: " Would that we could more securely and less perilously sail upon a stronger vessel or some divine word."

Though Immortality has been promised to us by Zoroaster and his disciples, neither they nor their immediate successors say much about the life to come. As to the mode of our existence in the life to come, or the nature of the bodily Resurrection, or the permanence of personal identity, or the reunion and natural recognition between the departed, or the place of their abode, in regard to all such questions they have said but little.

Like many other essential doctrines and dogmas the Zoroastrian belief in the Immortality, in the Eternal Life of the soul is quite explicitly stated in the Gâthâs. It is also found lucidly elaborated in the later writings of the Avesta and it increases in clearness of enunciation in our Pahlavi and Pâzend Traditions. One can hardly read words, expressions and texts

as the following without realizing how very firmly and sincerely the ancient holy Zoroastrian saints and sages believed when they proclaimed a future life: "May I take or deliver my mind and soul to Heaven, knowing the holy blessings and rewards of the (good) actions (prescribed) by Ahura-Mazda....."<sup>1</sup> ".....In the happy abode of Ahura-Mazda shall the righteous saints gather....."<sup>2</sup> "This I ask Thee, Ahura-Mazda! .....what are the rewards of the holy for their good actions and what are the awards for the sinful at the end (of life)....."<sup>3</sup> "(Oyou Daêvas! ) you are deceiving and depriving men of happy life and of immortality (beyond this world)....."<sup>4</sup> "This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me right; he who does not give this gift to the worthy, what shall be his punishment first (in this world), because I know what punishment will there be at last (in the other world)."<sup>5</sup> ".....for him (who is righteous) He (Ahura-Mazda) has appointed in His Realm Weal and Immortality....."<sup>6</sup> "If a man bring a nasu-burning fire to the Dâityô-gâtu, what shall be his reward when his soul has parted with his body."<sup>7</sup> "Ahura-Mazda answered: "The welfare of Paradise thou canst promise to that man for his reward in the other world."<sup>8</sup>

It would be meaningless to speak of the reward in the other world unless it was meant to lead somewhere, to some other form of existence. Again the authors of the Zend-Avesta were wont to speak of the dead as being gathered together in Heaven or Hell, which certainly does not convey the idea of annihilation. Besides it is worthy of note that they had special names to indicate the abode of the departed righteous as well as unrighteous souls, namely Garônmâna or Vehesht, Arghu-achishtô or Dûzakh. These words occur several times in the Zend-Avesta and in almost all cases they

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1 Ys. xxviii, 4 or 5.

2 Ys. xxx, 10.

3 Ys. xxxi, 14.

4 Ys. xxxii, 5.

5 Ys. xlv, 19.

6 Ys. xlv, 10.

7 Vend. viii, 81.

8 Vend. ix, 44.

mean not the tomb but the abodes for the departed righteous and the departed unrighteous souls. Again we are told that every one that has left this world, shall possess life everlasting. The wicked shall go into everlasting punishment if they do not repent and atone for their sins and amend their lives and the just shall go into Garônmâna into everlasting glory : " The man has repented of all his evil thoughts, words and deeds and if he has committed no other evil deed, he is absolved by his repentance for ever and ever."<sup>1</sup> " If a man voluntarily commits the unnatural sin.....For that deed nothing can pay, nothing can atone, nothing can cleanse him; it is a trespass for which there is no atonement for ever and ever."<sup>2</sup>

Though such texts may be added to almost indefinitely, they are sufficient to show how unmistakably the doctrine of a future life is insisted upon and reiterated in the inspired writings of our Religion. Our traditions have accepted these passages in their natural and literal interpretation and they never cease to remind us of the endless joys of Heaven and the interminable pains of Hell.

In the above-given quotations which above all others so definitely sustained the hope of an eternal life in Zoroastrian hearts, there is nothing sensational or sentimental. They have a real power of solid comfort and support to man. Not in the world's poor way did Zoroaster, his disciples or their successors tell their audience to hear up but as those who had seen through the chasm that separated this world from the next; as those who not only believed in but had the power to give others the means to live eternal life. They did not only believe in Immortality but revealed it as a motive to Obedience (Sraosha) to the Divine Law (Daênâ) or the Righteous Order (Asha) of Ahura-Mazda.

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<sup>1</sup> Vend. iii, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Vend. viii, 27.

Our Zoroastrian Religion is not a theory but a practice in Righteousness. It goes without saying that for every sort of work a motive is desirable to keep the worker steadfast and immovable. A noble motive is a powerful incentive to good deeds. The hope of Future Life, Immortality and of Resurrection offers such a motive. It is a stimulus to moral purity and an incentive to holy life and work.

The future state which Zoroastrianism brought to light, is a state of equitable retribution so that those who do good, will rise to glory, honour and peace, and those who do evil, will sink into shame and punishment. To believe in Immortality is to believe in the everlasting growth of virtue and under this conviction to choose virtue as our supreme good.

From the quotations given in the foregoing pages the important point of view which Zoroastrian philosophy takes regarding Immortality, is made quite evident. It is that of personality. Certainly Zoroastrian philosophers teach that personality is the ultimate reality. They teach that the material body is not the man but that consciousness and personality are the ultimate realities. From this Zoroastrian standpoint death is of but little consequence, a mere accident of the temporal order.

According to Zoroastrianism it is not upon such spurious immortality as the praises of posterity that man must set his heart but upon personal immortality in a future life. Man does not feel content indeed merely to live on that tribute of respect and admiration which humanity might pay to his memory. It is a personal immortality which he longs for and claims. His inborn and ineradicable craving is for life in another home after death, for life in Garô-nmâna=Home of songs.

It is important to note here that the belief in a life to come is revealed not only in the holy words of the ancient

Zoroastrian saints but it is clearly expressed in the sacred rites and ceremonies for the dead which we Zoroastrians have inherited from them and which we are so keen and careful to perform with the greatest regard and reverence. The belief has been so firmly implanted by our Religion that so long as true Zoroastrians live on the face of this globe, the faith in an eternal life will never cease to exist in them. When we study the Zend-Avesta as fully as it is possible to do, the very reservation which we may come across the Book, serves but to throw us back on the simple faith that there is a life to come.

The indifference and the indifferentism in which some of our Zoroastrian parents prefer to live and grow and the miserable way in which they bring up their children, are not such as to create in them the yearning for immortality and a happy future life. And yet such yearning is often awakened in them as in a moment by an adverse stroke of fortune, poverty, sickness or bereavement. Many instances of such awakening have come within the writer's own knowledge and experience.

The surest way for inculcating into men and women the motive to care and provide for the life hereafter is to endeavour to create around them a moral atmosphere, a proper religious environment and an environment of faith in the unseen and eternal. It is through the belief in the life everlasting that faith triumphs over suffering and separation from this world.

The Christian Church contends that immortal life, the doctrine of a future life, has been logically demonstrated. There are many who claim that the principle of immortality can be deduced from the record of the life, death and resurrection of Christ. Thus St. Paul pinned his entire faith in immortality on the fact that Christ was raised from the dead,



He expressed the grounds of his belief as follows : " Now, if Christ preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead ?

" But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen ; And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain."<sup>1</sup> Such was the reason all-sufficient to induce the great apostle Paul to believe in the doctrine of a future life. In the first place, the fact of Christ's resurrection is not sufficiently authenticated. None of those who were called as witnesses to the fact, had observed the phenomenon under the conditions necessary for impartial test.

There is again another argument which must be taken into account in a discussion over this matter. It is alleged that Christ was a God equal in power and coexistent with Him. If that be true, it does not follow that because he had the power to resume his body after having been crucified, dead and buried, that a common man possesses the same power of resurrection after the disintegration of his body. If Christ being a God rose from the dead, it cannot be proved from his case that every man must rise from the dead and become immortal like him.

Again, if Christ was a mere human being with all the faculties and conditions of a man and if God by a miracle restored him to life after death and burial, it can not be argued that God will suspend the natural law in the case of every man. The better course for God would then be to repeal the law of Nature and institute a new one instead of repeating the suspension in order to restore the life of every individual man. It will thus be seen that the Bible comprises many things that are unreasonable and unconvincing and sometimes quite absurd.

The Zend-Avesta, on the other hand, does not preach any such objectionable doctrines. As I have said in the

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians xv, 12-14.

foregoing pages, Zoroaster and the early Zoroastrian saints did not discuss nor did they think it necessary to give any proof of the immortality of the human soul, of the future life and the resurrection. Because the realization of immortality cannot be reached as a result of strictly logical reasoning but through consciousness brought about by a pious life in the spiritual sphere of the spiritual realities. Zoroaster and his disciples knew that the doctrine of Immortality was beyond the arguments of the philosopher or the investigation of the scientist. Therefore they only announced it as a fundamental fact, incontrovertible and undeniable.

It is impossible to give a demonstrative proof of Immortality. Many men of great learning and experience have begun and ended with the confession of the utter impossibility of demonstrating the fact of a future life by scientific methods. Thus Alger makes the following confession: "The majestic theme of our immortality allures yet baffles us. No fleshly implement of logic or cunning tact of brain can reach the solution. That secret lies in a tissueless realm, whereof no nerve can report before hand." Thus, again, the greatest American philosopher, Emerson, confesses his inability to offer scientific grounds or logical reasons for the faith he had in a future life in these words: "Man is to live hereafter....." "The question of a future life," says E. M. Caillard, the author of the book called Individual Immortality, "confessedly transcends the limits of scientific demonstration. It is not likely that we shall ever succeed in making the immortality of the soul a matter of scientific demonstration, for we lack the requisite data. It must ever remain an affair of religion rather than of science."

Sir Isaac Newton, great scientist as he was, could only say as he lay dying: "I don't know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been like a boy playing on the sea shore whilst the great ocean of truth lay all

undiscovered before me." We meet with the following in the book entitled "Studies in Theology" by J. E. Carpenter and P. Wickstead:—"That the conception of evolution points to a life beyond, is at least not denied by some of its most earnest advocates." Fisk says: "Speaking for myself, I can see no insuperable difficulty in the notion that at some point in the evolution of humanity this divine spark (the soul) may have acquired sufficient concentration and steadiness to survive the wreck of material forms and endure for ever. For my own part I believe in the immortality of the soul, not in the sense in which I accept the demonstrable truths of science but as a supreme act of faith, in the reasonableness of God's work. To deny immortality is to rob the whole process of its meaning."<sup>1</sup>

One cannot do better than remember the last word on the subject which was spoken by Herbert Spencer: "My position was that on the one hand there is no evidence supporting the belief in immortality and on the other that there is no evidence to warrant denial of it."<sup>2</sup> "If," said Jean Rousseau, "I had no other proof of the immortality of the soul than the prosperity of the wicked and the oppression of the just in this world, that alone would be enough to convince me. I would feel constrained to explain such a manifest contradiction, such a terrible exception to the established harmony of the Universe. I would be forced to explain within myself, 'All cannot end with death. All will be put into proper order after death.'"

After such abundant testimony of science and philosophy regarding the fact of personal immortality, let us see what poetry has to say on the subject. The witness of the poets to immortality is abundant. The verse of Tennyson and Browning is full of it.

The position taken by Tennyson in regard to personal immortality is unmistakable. Again and again in the poem

<sup>1</sup> Man's Destiny Ps. 30 and 107.

<sup>2</sup> Autobiography, ii, 379.

"In Memorium" which has done so much to strengthen the hope of immortality in hearts where once it was weak—doth Tennyson sound the note of death passing into life, of loss, passing into love. Quotations are needless and would be endless. I should however like to quote at least stanza CXXIX which is so typical of thought that runs through the poem :

" Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,  
 " So far, so near in woe and weal  
 " O loved the most, when most I feel  
 " There is a lower and a higher,  
 " Known and unknown ; human and divine ;  
 " Sweet human hand and lips and eye ;  
 " Dear heavenly friend that canst not die,  
 " Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine ;  
 " Strange friend, past, present, and to be ;  
 " Loved deeper, darker understood ;  
 " Behold, I dream a dream of good,  
 " And mingle all the world with thee."

This very famous poem is a strong testimony to the fact that the problem of a future life cannot be solved by arguments. It was by intuition alone that Tennyson attained to his firm conviction that his friend was alive, because Arthur's being was mingling with his own.

On almost every page of Browning's poetry suggestions of immortality are found. In that saddest of his poems "Andrea del Sarto" he utters the familiar words so often quoted: "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp or what's a heaven for?" "We are faulty why not? We have time in store." That is to Browning "the basis of a firm belief in the continuity of a personal life through death."

The phenomena of the spiritual world are at one with the phenomena of the natural world. Since Plato, Swedenborg, Bacon and Pascal, since "Sartor Resartus" and "In

Memorium" it has become but a common-place observation with thinkers that "the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." "In our doctrine of representatives and correspondences" says Swedenborg. "We shall treat of both these symbolical and typical resemblances and of the astonishing things that occur, I will not say in the living body only but throughout Nature and which correspond so entirely to supreme and spiritual things that one would swear that the physical world is quite symbolical of the spiritual world."<sup>1</sup> And Carlyle in "Sartor Resartus" says: "All visible things are emblems. What thou seest, is not there on its own account; strictly speaking is not there at all. Matter exists only spiritually, and to represent some idea "and body it forth." When, after sufficient investigation, we ask ourselves from what causes the almost universal expectation of another life springs and by what influences it is nourished, we shall not find adequate answer in less than four words: feeling, imagination, faith, reflection. The doctrine of a future life for man has been created by the combined force of instinctive desire, analogical observation, prescriptive authority and philosophical speculation. These are the four pillars on which the soul builds the temple of its hopes; or the four glasses through which it looks to see its eternal heritage."

Thus the Zoroastrian belief in a future life and immortality is confirmed by science, philosophy and poetry. It finds moreover, its sanction in the dictates of conscience. Nothing can drown the voice of a tremendous conscience which says: "I am immortal. The stars shall disappear but I am immortal. From my whole nature comes the word 'immortal.'" The fragmentary character of this life, whether viewed intellectually, emotionally or spiritually, the undeveloped potentialities of human nature, our innate consciousness of the indestructible character of our mental and spiritual faculties, are all part of a

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<sup>1</sup> See "Animal Kingdom,"

cummulative philosophical proof of immortality. When a great man of great mind dies, the question arises, to what purpose was such waste ? Thus Mathew Arnold addressed his father in death :

" Oh strong soul by what shore  
" Tarriest thou now ? For that force  
" Surely has not been left vain !  
" Somewhere surely, afar  
" In the sounding labour house vast  
" Of being, is practised that strength,  
" Zealous, beneficent, firm."

Also such consideration as the universality of the belief is the argument drawn from experience and it goes to establish immortality as a truth which most emphatically has consequences.

Nothing so proves the necessity of a future life as the impunity with which great rascals ply their nefarious trade in this world and thrive. It should be clear to every man who has faith in Divine Justice that a day of retribution must come and the cause of justice and purity must triumph in the end.

The joys which we indulge into this world, cannot satisfy us. We all know that from experience. Alexander longing for other worlds to conquer and yet drowned in his own bottle. Byron wearied by disquietudes about the world; Voltaire cursing his own life and soul, while all the people of Paris were applauding him; these are illustrations all of the fact that this world cannot make a man truly happy. Zoroastrianism promises man much greater joy, much sublimer solace, higher peace and happiness after his departure from this to the other world.

Considering the scope with which Nature has endowed the human mind, reason and imagination, it seems as though

it is far easier for us to think and reason about the continuation of a life which we possess than to think and reason about its first beginning. That our soul after the disintegration of our body should enter upon a higher form of life, is undoubtedly wonderful. But it is well to bear in mind that there is nothing so wonderful, so incomprehensible and so impossible to explain as the indisputable fact that it began without any kind of previous existence out of a state of absolute nothingness. A modern scientist truly observes: "We can never apprehend the first cause of any phenomena." The phenomena of gravity, of crystallisation and of chemical affinity are in themselves just as incomprehensible to-day as they were in the first dawn of history.

Thus, then, the general fact of a future life and immortality revealed by Zoroaster is upheld by the clearest conclusions of science and philosophy, of history and of the experience and common sense of man. And observe that this dogma of Zoroastrianism is the very pivot upon which the whole spiritual life of a Zoroastrian turns. It is so bound up with the Zoroastrian Religion, so woven into the whole constitution that its destruction would mean the destruction of the Zoroastrian Religion and the Zoroastrian Race.

Undoubtedly, the Zoroastrian solutions of the questions in regard to the future life and immortality of the human soul have been proved from generation to generation to be the surest safe-guards for the well-being of nations and communities; and hence they have been accepted and widely promulgated by the founders of the Hebrew, Christian and Mohammadan religions.

If we consult the history of human thought and wisdom, we find that the question has been looked upon with varying convictions. Plato like Descartes affirms; Cicero like Bayle doubts; Epicurus like Voltaire denies. But whence

comes all this difference of opinion about man's own destiny ? It is not difficult to suggest the reason. All the phenomena of nature present themselves to our eyes as so many facts. But the secret of our destiny is not a phenomenon present to our observation. We cannot and shall never see immortality as face to face. It will not show itself to our mortal vision as Nature does. Hence it is that our natural means of knowledge fail us when we try to penetrate the secret of man's destiny.

Scientific materialists assert that after the death of man nothing remains; that the human body simply disintegrates into its component elements and that what we call soul, is merely a temporary self-consciousness produced as a by-product of organic action which will evaporate like a steam.

Materialistic view of life has found many and ardent champions. Each succeeding century has witnessed its advocates fighting with might and main in defence of views which seemed a justification of their reckless indulgence in the pleasures of this world. Ancient history shows that it was nothing but pride that deluded Democritus, Epicurus, Pliny, Lucretius into disbelieving in a life after death. In our own day there is no lack of men whose disbelief in the soul's immortality has been largely influenced by the same vice. The consequences are theirs which must naturally follow such a denial.

The materialist chooses to ask: "Who knows anything of the soul after all ? Why should I mar my enjoyment of my present life by mere conjectures ? What have I to do with death and its consequences ?" The answer to such materialistic questions is given by Kant who maintained that no honest soul had ever yet existed that was truly reconciled to the belief that the death was the end of all. "The strongest argument in favour of Immortality," says Cicero, "is that Nature herself is tacitly persuaded of the immortality of the



soul." That immortality has not been denied even by those who have travelled far along the road of materialism and positivism, may be gathered from the words of Prof. Huxley: "He who fights on the side of moral truth in a world like ours, will questionably feel himself the stronger for the conviction that some time or another his whole being will enter into possession of perfect peace and happiness."

The belief in future life exists even among the most degraded nations, tribes and peoples of the world, though accompanied by much that is gross, brutal and absurd. This belief is shown by their religious rites and funeral practices. A modern traveller gives an account of a South African king or chief who wished to despatch a message to his favourite warrior who being killed had been entombed with the usual pomp and ceremony. How did he send his message? He called a little naked boy and gave him the message verbally. Then he struck off the body's head with a single blow of his sword, exclaiming: "Go and deliver my message." At any rate, this proves that the chief believed that the warrior still existed somewhere and that the boy after being killed, would also continue to live on and communicate with others in that unknown world.

From Clapperton's "Second Voyage" Letourneau quotes: "In Equatorial Africa when the king dies, four of his wives and a number of slaves are forced to poison themselves. At Jenna, at the death of a chief one or two of his widows must commit suicide on the same day in order to furnish him with pleasant company in the world beyond the tomb." Such was also the common practice in India. Even in our own days we now and then read of the self immolation of Suttees though strong measures have been taken by our benign Government to suppress the practice.

To deny immortality is to turn sceptic and to cast off all that is best, greatest and noblest in human nature. It has been

remarked that man is not only no better than beast but infinitely worse. Let once people believe in the doctrine of perfect and eternal annihilation after death, and they would ask : "Why should we endure pain, sorrow and toil, and weariness, poverty and hunger, want, disease and disgrace, when we can release ourselves from them all by suicide ?" If there be no future, no reward for virtue, no punishment for vice, then there would be nothing so reasonable in men as for them to break through all restraints and give loose rein to every evil passion. And if there be nothing left to live for, then reason might justly advocate end of life by suicide. This was actually the view of many of the best educated men. Thus Pliny declared : "The greatest good that the gods have bestowed upon men, is the power of taking his own life."

The history of many nations provide sufficient illustration of the principle that in proportion as people ignore the belief in God and Immortality of the soul, they fall into decay and perish. We see what comes out of the denial of the fact of immortality by the example of the peoples of the West. The immediate result of such disavowal is the casting off of those restraints which are inculcated through the faith in the unseen, the loosening of the bond between faith and morals and the coarsening of social and spiritual ideals. In our own community we find increasing tendency towards what may best be termed animation, i. e. excessive indulgence in food and drink, and absorption in pleasure and materialism. To our chagrin and sorrow do we find many of the so-called educated or reformed Parsis going now-a-days to extremes in the liberty wherewith they transgress the moral and religious laws. They may flout as best they may like, our Zoroastrian belief in future life and immortality, may deride the Zoroastrian ideas regarding the future destiny of the soul with its rewards and punishments, the fact remains that they have done valuable service to men. The terrors of such Zoroastrian ideas and

doctrines have been proved to have been a powerful means of restraint from wrong doing amongst men whom nothing else could have restrained. Besides the promises which the doctrines give, have filled the human hearts with comfort and consolation.

As I have said in the fore-going pages, a true Zoroastrian need not fear natural death, nor lament, weep or wail over it or show any sign of resentment or sorrow.<sup>1</sup> Zoroastrianism tells us that there is nothing to fear death in its physical aspect. Because immediately before death there is an absence of consciousness and of pain. As death approaches near and the senses become numb ; sensitiveness to pain grows less and less until it entirely vanishes.

Nearly all medical men, especially those of wide and varied experience assure us that death in its physical aspect is much more terrible in anticipation than in reality. The great naturalist Mr. Buffon says in his "History of Man" that death is as natural as life. It is as easy to leave this world as to enter it. Another great authority, Dr. Leo Grindon says : 'To fancy, as many do, that death is physically painful is quite a mistake. Death is a sleep, a suspension of man's faculties.....' Dr. Baillie tells us that his observations of death-beds incline him to the firm belief that "Nature intended we should go out of the world as unconsciously as we come into it." I happened once to converse with a learned friend of mine on the subject of death, when in reply to my various questions he said: "Well, the majority of men do undoubtedly die calmly enough, and my explanation is this: 'So long as God intends a man to live, He wisely infuses into his soul a certain natural dread and horror of death in order that he may be induced to take care of himself and to guard against

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1 D. D-Dk. Vol. xvii, P 27; Minôr Khîrad xvi, 13; etc.

danger and needless risks. But when God intends a man to die, there is no longer any object in keeping up such fear." According to another great authority when death comes near, its terrors do not seem to be felt by the patient. Even those who fear death, whilst strong and healthy, forget their fear when death is at hand. Most people become unconscious before they die. The experience of most dying men is one of perfect calm and rest some while preceding death.

According to our Scriptures a Zoroastrian's fears whilst he is living, should not therefore be directed to the act of dying as such but rather to that which is to happen after death; to the searching investigation which is to take place over his earthly deeds; to the searching gaze of the Omnipotent and Omniscient Judge, Ahura-Mazda, to the nature of His impartial decision and the soul's fate. As is quite evident from the Zend-Avesta, some thoughts and forebodings come to the soul not immediately before death but immediately after it: "Thou shouldest not become presumptuous through life; for death comes on thee at last; the dog and the bird lacerate the corpse and the perishable part falls to the ground."<sup>1</sup> 'The soul which one knows to be happy and immortal, would then depart from the body along with the animating life, the informing consciousness and the remaining resources of life. The body is inert, unmoving and not to be galled and no pain whatever galls it, nor is it perceived; and the soul with the life is outside of the body and is safe as regards its gnawing but through the spiritual perception it sees and knows it. The soul that is wicked, is again desirous of its bodily existence, when it (spiritually) sees it and mourns thus: 'The wonderfully constructed body which was its vesture is dispersed. In the prosperity which this body of mine had, it would have been possible for me to atone for sin and to save the soul but

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1 Minôî Khirad II, 110.

now I am separated from the joy of the world.....and I have attained to the perplexing account and more serious danger.' And the gnawing becomes as grievous to it.....

" And of that soul which is righteous and filled with the great joy that arises from being really certain of the best existence the spiritual life which was with its body, on account of the great righteousness, fit for the exalted (place)..... is well developed. And the consciousness of man (i.e. the soul of man) as it sits three nights (after death) outside the body, in the vicinity of the body, has to remember and expect what is truly fearful and troublesome unto the demons or wicked souls and what is reward, peace and glad tidings unto the souls of the good. " The spirit of the body.....is indestructible on account of being the spiritual life; so is the will which resided therein even when it shall be released from its abode (body).

" It is said that the souls of those passed away and of the dead are three nights ( and days ) on earth; and the first night satisfaction comes to them from their good thoughts and vexation from their evil thoughts, the second night comes pleasure from their good words and discomfort from their evil words and the third night comes exaltation from good deeds."<sup>1</sup>

" When one of the faithful departs this life, the soul takes its seat near the head (of the corpse) singing the Ustavaiti Gâthâ and proclaiming happiness: ' Happy is he, happy the man, whoever he be, to whom Ahura-Mazda gives the full accomplishment of his wishes.' " " On that night his soul tastes as much of pleasure as the whole of the living world can taste. For three days the soul keeps its seat near the place where its dead body was placed and feels the same pleasure. Whereas the soul of the wicked, taking its seat near the place of its dead body, feels as much of suffering and pain as the whole living world can feel."<sup>2</sup> Thus, according to the above given statements of our Book immediately after death the thoughts

1 Dd. xvi, 2-7; xvii, 4, xx, 2,

2 Yt. xxii, 1-6 and 19-24,

and forebodings breed trouble and anxiety in the mind of the sinner and fill the soul with feelings of fear and pain, whereas they breed calmness and peace in the mind of the righteous and fill his soul with feelings of joy and felicity.

The statements just made as well as others go to demonstrate that the soul or the mind of man is not dependent for its existence on its physical organisation. It is quite independent of the bodily conditions. In all the statements we find a personality, a distinct entity. It is evident from them that the disembodied soul retains its conscious individuality, its consciousness, memory and will. It continues to live its life of active thought and volition. Its consciousness and memory are not blotted out and its condition is not equivalent to annihilation. It possesses all the intellectual, moral and spiritual powers and attributes ; it is capable of entertaining emotions, affections, hopes, aspirations and desires ; it is capable of experiencing joy and felicity, sorrow and pain ; it is capable of perfectly remembering its experiences and deeds ; in a word, it is capable of development, progress and perfection : " The man who in both the worlds secures good name by the excellent means of performing laborious work for Tane-pasin, is the obtainer of the best recompense....."<sup>1</sup> "It is declared that the souls in Paradise are in an undistressed condition and these invisible spirits (or souls) who are the inmates of Paradise, ever improve themselves so as to be worthy of the perfect felicity of the future Renovation....."<sup>2</sup> "The Astôvî-dât (demon of death) shall carry off every one of the mortals... ..and not one can escape from him but each one only saves that which is the soul. This, too, that it is only in the (spiritual state) that the soul understands what is spiritual reward and retribution and it does not see them in the bodily condition, if it could have seen them in the bodily conditions then from

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, P. 627.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 400

the very commencement it would not have performed the least sin for anything of enjoyment and worldly pleasure."<sup>1</sup>

We see through these quotations that the faculties of the soul do not perform abnormal functions in the other life. Even those faculties which do not perform normal functions in this life, are led to normal activities in the next. It is obvious that in the physical world man is surrounded by temptations and false suggestions in all conceivable forms. They continually beset every human being. But after the departure of the soul from the body i. e. out of the physical world the mind goes into a different environment, an environment in which the prodigious power of right thought (spenta-man) which is characteristic of the soul, enables it to grasp and assimilate all that is true and beneficent. In this environment the mind is never led astray. In such an environment its power of perceiving the laws of its being and the necessary conditions for its welfare becomes inerrant; the aims and objects of its creation become quite clear and consequently the soul takes the direct way towards its Final Good, namely, Perfection and Renovation.

Thus, then, Zoroastrianism, as we have seen above, distinctly tells us that when the soul is free from the body, it continues to possess the primary and most essential attribute or power, namely, personality or conscious individuality which man, constituted as he is in this life, most naturally desires his soul to possess as a means of enjoyment in a life to come. It is quite clear that all other enjoyments depend upon the retention of conscious individuality. Any condition minus the personality, would be the equivalent of annihilation. "What a man is and has in himself," says Schopenhauer, "in a word, personality with all it entails, is the only immediate and direct factor in his happiness and welfare." This must be as

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1 D. D. Dk. Vol. xvi, P. 29.

true of a future life as it is of the present. According to the Zend-Avesta personality on which man's happiness or welfare depends, will ever subsist in a future life,

As I have said above, the soul after the dissolution of the body becomes most active and powerful. Its powers all perform their functions almost perfectly in a realm where perversion is not possible. Its power to reason and conclude correctly becomes practically perfect. Not less perfect becomes its memory. It remembers all the incidents, events, ideas, facts and impressions that it had experienced during its past life. It remembers all those opprobrious thoughts, words, and actions for which he was responsible on this earth. The Zend-Avesta tells us all this because according to it man has not another reason, another conscience, another memory in the next life but he has the same which he had on earth.

As we have seen, the soul can act after the dissolution of the body and all its acts done either in the material world or in the spiritual, either in this or in the next life, are to be taken into account at the time when judgment shall be given both at the time of the future individual Judgment as well as of the future general or universal Judgment: "It is said that the souls of those passed away and dead are for three days and nights on this earth. On the fourth day dawn they go to the place of account on Albûrz, the account being rendered they proceed to the Chinvat Bridge which is said to rest upon the Dâtîh (Judicial) peak which is in Afrân-vêg, in the middle of the world; reaching into the vicinity of that peak is that beam-shaped spirit, the Chinvat Bridge, which is thrown across from the Albûrz enclosure back to the Dâtîh peak. As it were that bridge is like a beam of many sides, of whose edges there are some which are broad and there are some which are thin and sharp; its broad sides are so large that its width is twenty-seven reeds and its sharp sides are so thin that it is just like the edge of a razor. And when the



souls of the righteous and of the wicked arrive, it turns to that side which is for their necessities through the glory of the Creator and the command of the angel (Rashnu) who takes the just account. "Moreover, the bridge becomes a broad bridge for the righteous as much as the height of nine spears.....and it becomes a narrow bridge for the wicked, even unto a resemblance to the edge of a razor. And he who is of the righteous, passes over the bridge and a worldly similitude of the pleasantness of his path upon it is when thou shalt eagerly and unweariedly walk in the golden coloured spring and with the gallant body and sweet-scented blossom in the pleasant skin of that maiden, the good conscience which is symbolised by the handsome maiden who is supposed to meet the righteous soul on its way. He who is of the wicked as he places a footstep on to the bridge, on account of affliction and its sharpness, falls from the middle of the bridge and rolls into Hell below. And the unpleasantness of its path to Hell is in similitude such as the worldly one in the midst of that shrinking and dying existence;....." And the third night, on the fresh arrival of a dawn, its sin, in the frightful, polluted shape of a maiden who is an injurer, comes to meet it, it comes on shuddering, quivering and unwillingly running to the account. And through being deceived and deceiving.....it is ruined and falls from the Bridge and is precipitated to Hell.'<sup>1</sup>

"At the end of the third night, when the dawn appears, it seems to the soul of the faithful (or righteous) as if it were brought amidst plants and scents; it seems as if a wind were blowing from the region of the south, a sweet-scented wind, sweeter scented than any other wind in the world. "And it seems to the soul of the faithful one as if he were inhaling that wind with the nostrils and he thinks: 'Whence does that wind blow, the sweetest-scented wind.....' And it seems

1 Dd. xx, xxi and xxv.

to him as if his own conscience were advancing to him in that (sweet) wind, in the shape of a maiden fair, bright, white-armed, strong, tall-formed, highstanding, thick-breasted, beautiful of body, noble, of a glorious seed, of the size of a maid in her fifteenth year, as fair as the fairest things in the world. "And the soul of the faithful one addressed her, asking: 'What maid art thou, who art the fairest maid I have ever seen?' And she, being her own conscience answers him: 'O thou youth of good thoughts, words and deeds, of good religion, I am thy own conscience. Everybody loved thee for that greatness, goodness, fairness, sweet-scentedness, victorious strength and freedom from sorrow in which thou dost appear to me. And so thou, O youth of good thoughts, good words and good deeds and of good religion didst love me for that greatness, goodness and fairness.....in which I appear to thee. I was lovely and thou madest me still lovelier; I was fair and thou madest me still fairer; I was desirable and thou madest me still more desirable; I was sitting in a forward place and thou madest me sit in the foremost place through this good thought, good word and good deed of thine, and so men worship me for my having long sacrificed unto and conversed with Ahura-Mazda.'"¹

"At the end of the third night.....when the dawn appears, it seems to the soul of the wicked one as if it were brought amidst snow and stench, and as if a wind were blowing from the region of the North.....a foul-scented wind, the foul-scented of all the winds in the world. And it seems to the soul of the wicked man as if he were inhaling that with the nostrils and he thinks: 'Whence does that wind blow, the foulest scented wind.....?'"<sup>2</sup> "The soul goes up to the awful lofty Chinvat Bridge, to which every one, righteous and wicked, is coming. And many opponents have watched there with the desire of evil...."<sup>3</sup>

¹ Ibid.

² Yt. xxii, 7-14, 25-32.

³ Minōi Khirad ii, 18 and etc.

"The soul enters the way.....open both to the wicked and to the righteous. At the head of the Bridge, the holy Bridge, made by Ahura-Mazda, they ask for their spirits and souls the reward for the worldly goods they gave away (in charity) here below..... "Then comes the beautiful, wellformed maid with the dogs at her side, one who can distinguish....."1

"On the fourth day dawn the account is prepared about the sin which he has atoned for and the good work which is its equivalent there is no need for account, since the account is about the good works which may be appropriated by him as his own and about the sin which may remain in him as its origin..... They balance it therewith and they weigh the excess and deficiency, as it may be of the other good works and sin..." "Through good works and the growth of good works is the recompense of the soul, so that they should do those good works in atonement for sin. And concerning the sin eradicated it is said : 'An original good work eradicates original sin and the growth of a good work eradicates the growth of a sin.' " "When any others do a good work for him who has passed away, after the passing away and if he who has passed away, did not order that good work in his life-time and did not bequeath it, nor was its originator and it was not his even by design, then it does not go and does not reach him out at the balance. "If he who has passed away, did not order and did not even bequeath that good work but was consenting to it by design, that which shall be done in his life-time reaches out in the three nights for the advancement of his position ; but that which shall be done after his passing away, is not in the account of the three nights and the balance, but reaches out at the time the good work is proceeded with for the enjoyment of the soul. "And if he who has passed away, ordered, be-

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1 Vend. xix, 29-30

queathed any good work and was the originator and cause of the soul's employment, although it is proceeded with after his death, it reaches him for the happiness of his soul....." Any good work whatever which is proceeded with is clearly a good work.....; in the account of his soul the good work is as much with him who did it, but the soul of him by whom the good work is done by his own hand is handsomer and stronger than of him by whom it is ordered. And its similitude is such as when a man's handsome and seemly suit of clothes is his own and he wears it on his body and his handsomer, more splendid and more seemly than another man who wears a suit of clothes which is his own by theft. "The good works are very different one from the other; for that which he orders out of his own wealth, is more effectual than that which others may do for him without order. And among the kinds of good work, that is more effectual which one practises himself and with his own toil; then that which one sets going out of whatever is his own by his own order, regarding which he afterwards bequeaths and orders out of his own property and it comes into progress, and lastly that which others may do for him. When not consenting as to the good work and not his by design, even though others may do it for him, it does not then come into his possession....."<sup>1</sup>

"The account about the doers of action, as to good works and sin (is prepared) three times every day whilst the doer of the actions is living. Vohâman should prepare because taking account of the thoughts, words and deeds of all material existences is among his duties. And about the sin which is committed by breakers of promises, even in the world Mithrô is said to be over the bodies, words and fortunes of the promise-breakers..... Mithrô is the account-keeper. In the three nights' account Srosh, the righteous and Rashnu,

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<sup>1</sup> Dd, viii, ix, xiii.

the just, are over the estimate of the limits of the good works of the righteous and the sins of the wicked. In the future existence on the completion of every account, the Creator Ahura-Mazda Himself takes account, by whom both the former account of the three nights and all the thoughts, words and deeds of the creatures are known through His Omniscient Wisdom."<sup>1</sup>

"When he who is wicked dies, his soul rushes about for three days and nights in the vicinity of the head of that wicked man (of his body) and sobs thus: 'Whither do I go and now what do I make as a refuge? And the sin and crime of every kind that were committed by him in the world, he sees with his own eyes in those three days and nights. The fourth day Vizaresh, the demon, comes and binds the soul of the wicked with the very evil noose<sup>2</sup> and with the opposition of Srosh, the righteous, he leads it up to the Chinvat Bridge. Then Rashnu, the just, detects that soul through its wickedness. "Afterwards, Vizaresh takes that soul of the wicked and mercilessly and maliciously beats and maltreats it. And that soul of the wicked weeps with a loud voice, is fundamentally horrified.....When his struggling and supplication are of no avail whatever and no one comes to his assistance from the divinities nor yet from the demons...moreover, Vizâresh, the demon, drags miserably to the inevitable Hell. "And then a maiden.....comes to meet him. And that wicked soul speaks to that evil or ugly woman thus: 'Who mayst thou be, that never in the world was such ugly woman seen by me, who was more vile and hideous than thee.' And she speaks in answer to the soul thus: 'I am not a maiden but I am thy (very) deeds, thou monster who art evil-thinking, evil-speaking, evil-doing and of evil religion.....I am this of thine, the evil thoughts, the evil words and the evil deeds which were

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1 Dd. xiv, 2-5.

2 Vend xix, 29-32.

thought spoken and done by thee. When I have become uncommendable, I am made still more uncommendable.....''<sup>1</sup>

"Be it known that he in whose body the (good) daēnā is a guest.....is (spiritually) as beautiful as a maiden having a most handsome body and is most desirable to the sight. He is benignant as the Sun to the Universe of Ahura-Mazda and he looks on (the good creation) with as good an eye as a sincerely loving father looks on a well born son and is delighted at beholding his visage from a distance.....''<sup>2</sup>

Thus we read in our Scriptures that the deeds of men follow them because they are living like their souls in them. After death the soul recalls the whole course of its past life, seeing it in the clear light of truth. Our Book says that the pious soul sees it immediately after death and feels joy and felicity; and the sinful soul sees it and feels pain and sorrow.

Consciousness of guilt is at all times oppressive. It is more particularly so when the soul is free from the body and the disguises of the bodily life have passed away. For, then, to the man who has stolen and defrauded and slandered, the aggregate of all his sins is brought together before him; all and together they glare in his sight and afflict his soul. The soul is in a constant state of perturbation and anxiety. And our Scriptures tell us that no sooner does a reprobate leave this world, he comes to know it clearly and full well that he must soon appear before the seat of the Judge for a trial. His own crimes together with the spiritual implements of punishment and torture gather close and thick about his mind. Though convicts feel always dejected and melancholy under imprisonment, they even feel more so on the day when they are taken from their cells for trial into the immediate presence of the judge. It is the same with the souls of men. A horrible

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<sup>1</sup> *Mīnôî Khrīd*, i, 158-180, also  
S. B. E. Dk. bk. ix, chap. xx, 3-8.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, 362 and 363.

dread overtakes the souls when they behold their sins in their true colour and find themselves exposed to the liability of severe punishment as a consequence of their sins.

• The Zend-Avesta tells us that the disembodied soul at the end of the third day after death starts on its journey to the Chinvat Bridge. The soul of the righteous goes all the way through sweet-scented plants and winds, through regions full of joy and felicity. Whereas the soul of the wicked sinner goes on all its way through dreary regions, full of sorrow and pain.

On the Bridge every soul has to undergo a trial before the Tribunal of the Spiritual Beings, Ahura-Mazda (God) Sraosha, Rashnu, Arshtât, Meher, Fravashi (The Guardian Spirit), and the good Vâyu. This trial is different from the trial in our law-courts on this earth. It differs mainly in the fact that its justice knows no difference. None is exempted from the trial. All must appear before the Judgment Seat. All souls must stand on the same level and be judged by one and the same law. The soul of the king is to be judged by the same tribunal and by the same law as that which judges the beggar and the slave. No dignity, no office can be an apology for transgression. All the Yazatas above-mentioned sit in judgment on the Chinvat Bridge over every soul from off this earth.

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Certainly, Right (Astâd), Justice (Rashnu), Obedience (Sraosha), Truth (Meher) are urged on us by our Religion. When they are urged by our Religion, is there not a distinct conviction within us that they are not a merely personal obligation? Do we not at once recognise that they are promulgated within us as those to which every human being is subject? Still more do we not feel that the law of Right, Justice, Truth, and Obedience is not the law of this earth only but of the en-

ture Universe? With an inner conviction do we all feel that the Law is not transient and that repealed it can never be. It is as ever lasting as it is universal. The ideas of Right, Justice, Truth, Obedience are not only with us in this material world but are also transported by us to the next. They play the most prominent part in the trial of the soul on the Chinvat Bridge.

On that Bridge Sraosha awaits the soul which has to stand before him face to face. Everything turns on how it stands with Sraosha. No one else can do anything at all. Neither parents, relatives, friends, priests nor head-priests can do anything for the soul so far as the determination of its final fate or destiny is concerned. None can alter its doom. At the meeting of the soul with Ahura, Sraosha, Rashnu, Meher, Arshtat, Daênâ (Conscience), and Fravashi, all is determined and determined without power of appeal.

The soul of the righteous as well as of the unrighteous has to render account of all its deeds done on earth. It has to render its full and perfect account of the very minutest and the most secret deeds, all of which are given consideration at the great Tribunal. There is no possibility of an evasion as the questions are put: What use didst thou make of all thy possessions, energy, time, opportunity and wealth? To what purpose didst thou employ thy senses and faculties? What use didst thou make of thy riches and opportunities for charity? "Man by the excellent means of performing meritorious deeds for Tanepasin secures good fame in both the worlds."<sup>1</sup> "At the head of the Chinvat Bridge, the holy Bridge made by Mazda, they ask for their spirits and souls the reward for the worldly goods which they gave away here below."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. ix, 627.

<sup>2</sup> Vend. xix, 29.



Thus does the Tribunal call every soul to account for its sins of commission and omission in the material world. The Yazatas then proceed to read the ponderous register of all its delinquencies in regular succession, to enumerate its hidden acts of meanness and to expose its most secret infamies, sounding aloud as they proceed, in the ears of its conscience, now no longer sealed in deafness, words to the effect: "These things thou hast done and these thou hast not."

Several witnesses give testimony in this solemn Trial. Among them Ahura-Mazda is the highest and the most important witness. As our Book tells us, nothing escapes the mind of Ahura-Mazda. Not even the minutest deeds and the minutest circumstances under which they are done by man on earth, escape His eyes and His consideration. He can see all acts both those that are secret and those that are open.<sup>1</sup>

Another important witness Sraosha is the bright, refulgent and beautiful Yazata. All critical and observant of man's character and conduct he says: "I have been a Messenger to him, I have guarded him, I have watched him, I have defended him and often times led him to the right path and yet I have to testify that this soul rejected my mission. Though I came from Heaven as the Messenger of Ahura-Mazda, he did not listen to me or remain under my guidance. I dare not keep back this testimony for I am answerable to Ahura-Mazda, the Omiscient Lord." Other witnesses at the Chinvat Bridge are the Angels, Rashnu, Arshtât and Meher. They render impartial account and evidence in the trial of the departed soul. They are not interested parties forsooth. They are all for getting an independent and impartial judgment.

And, besides these heavenly witnesses there is one other, no less important than the rest. That witness is the dead man's own conscience (Daênâ). In Vend XIX and Yt.

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<sup>1</sup> Ys, xxxi, 13.

XXII, the following questions and answers between the conscience and the soul of the departed are indicated or implicated: "Who art thou! What were thy doings? Why dost thou come here." "Oh," says the conscience, "I was your own conscience; I was born and lived with you in the material world; I instructed you, warned you, showed you the right and the wrong, advising you to adopt the one and avoid the other. I must on behalf of Ahura-Mazda who created me and sent me with you, testify and say that you have done many things you ought not to have done and have left undone many things you ought to have done." Thus the evidence on the part of the prosecution is closed.

Then the deeds, good or bad, done by the soul on earth are carefully and accurately considered and weighed in the presence of all. After that the Yazatas give out the stern and inflexible law and pass their judgment; and Ahura-Mazda, the greatest Judge and Law-giver, gives His final decision and sanction. According to the Gathâ His is the most correct decision because He is all-knowing and all-seeing.<sup>1</sup>

Sentence follows judgment, an awful sentence for the sinner. Terrible as it is for the human frame to be torn and mangled by some sudden catastrophe, it is more terrible yet for the wicked soul to undergo the punishment as is prescribed by the Supreme Court on the Chinvat Bridge. According to the quotations given above it is not Ahura-Mazda's mission nor is it His wish to pass sentence of condemnation upon the sinful. That work He leaves to man's own conscience which is His delegate, speaking to the soul the whole truth and nothing but the truth. On the Chinvat Bridge conscience will be the great Book on the Day of Judgment. Conscience will call up the whole past. We are told by the Zend-Avesta that all sinful acts as well as all good

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<sup>1</sup> Ys. xxxi, 13 and xlv, 4.

acts, even those buried at the lowest depths, will rise up to the surface and will assume a visible form before the soul. This vision is itself the Judgment.

• Before the soul of the righteous its conscience appears in the shape of a fair maiden as in her fifteenth year, comely to behold, bright, graceful and tall, in short as beautiful as the most beautiful things in the world. And when she is questioned who she is, she answers that she is the conscience of the soul of good thoughts, good words, good deeds and of good religion. She further says: "Thou didst love me for that goodness, fairness, greatness, victorious strength and freedom from sorrow in which I appeared before you. I was lovely, fair and desirable and you made me more lovely, more fair and more desirable through your good thoughts, good words, and good deeds." This visible representation which our Scriptures thus give of the good conscience, is on a par with the fact that men's disposition or character demonstrates itself effectually in the physiognomy of their faces. Kindness or goodness as an occasional impulse may give no illumination to the features but kindness or goodness as the life-long dominant habit does produce nobility of countenance as surely as the shining of the sun imparts freshness to flowers. No man ever indulged a gracious feeling or was moved by a righteous indignation or stirred by a benevolent impulse, but its effect was more or less indicated in the expression of his countenance: "Whosoever mind the good Daênâ permeates, his appearance is as much beautiful as that of other desirable objects. No sooner does one behold him with a good eye than one is exceedingly delighted with him. He is as beautiful as a maiden most desirable to the sight....."<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare says: "Beauty lives with kindness." Johnson makes much the same remark, "Beauty, without kindness,

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1 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, 362 and 363.

dies unenjoyed and undelighted." According to Huges "The true art of assisting beauty consists in embellishing the whole person by the proper ornaments of virtuous and commendable qualities. By this help alone it is that those who are the favourite work of nature, become animated and are in a capacity of exerting their charms ; and those who are neglected by her, like models wrought in haste, are capable in a great measure of finishing what she has left imperfect."

On the other hand, there appears on the Chinvat Bridge before the soul of the sinful an ugly woman full of evil thoughts, evil words and evil deeds, and ill-principled. She is the evil conscience of the wretched sinner who surveys himself at such a crisis not merely with disgust but with positive abhorrence. This woman is the visible representation of all the deceptions, self-conceits, falsehoods, enmities, envies, jealousies and other vices practised by the sinful soul on this earth. Thus, then, according to our Zoroastrian Religion the great Book on the Day of Judgment is man's own conscience that recalls all past deeds. The best thing of which a man can possess himself, as we have seen on the authority of the Zend-Avesta, is a good conscience and the worst a bad conscience.

The sacred Book inculcates that there is a punishment which peculiarly belongs to man, and affects his nature. And what is that punishment? Is it hunger merely? Is it bodily infliction, wound or even death? No. 'The Zend-Avesta's description of the Chinvat Bridge Trial before the Spiritual Tribunal clearly indicates that the punishment proper to man is shame. The beasts may be beaten, wounded or slain, though they can never be put to shame. But when the sinner is put to public shame, then it is through it that as man he is chiefly punished. As we read in our Scriptures, there appears on the

Bridge before the full Supreme Court, before Ahura-Mazda, Sraosha, Rashnu and other Spiritual Beings, the sinful conscience and it is forced to show itself in all its filth and stench and in full deformity, without anything to hide or cover it, cast down with shame.

Piso, a noble Roman, when summoned to appear before the Senate in the degrading dress usually provided for criminals, no sooner did he behold in the court the formalities awaiting his condemnation, the judges ascending the tribunal, his accusers taking their proper places, then quite unable to bear up under the shame of being the common gazing stock, indignantly and after a brief pause drew forth a dagger from beneath his cloak and killed himself. Alvaro Bassano, a great admiral, a man most renowned for his many enterprising voyages and his splendid victories at sea, received an order from Philip the Second, King of Spain, to collect together that vast naval force against England which was so miserably destroyed afterwards. Having many ships of war to get ready for so grand an undertaking he was prevented from pushing on his preparations so expediently as the king imagined he could do. Therefore, feeling irritated, the king summoned him to court and sternly said ; " It is quite clear that in executing my commission you have not acted as I had reason to hope you would and as it was your duty to do " He said nothing more than this. But, this was enough to break the man's heart and kill him. Alvaro left the court with a downcast face, returned home, took to his bed and died a few days after of a broken heart. Conceive then, what under shame sinning souls can do before the Supreme Tribunal on the Chinvat Bridge ! Can they call to requisition the use of a weapon to terminate their existence ? And if the mere fact of their appearance before the Tribunal should cause them unbearable shame, how would they feel, when the Supreme Court of Ahura Sraosha, Rashnu, Meher, Arshtîst and others should proceed to read the indictments

against them and to publish their most hidden acts of meanness?<sup>1</sup> All the greater should be their confusion when the souls see themselves as the one cause of their own undoing and their own ruin. Everything cries out aloud to them in remonstrance in their misery. The past in all its reality stands out clearly at last and the sinful souls see themselves driven to acknowledgement: "O Ahura! it is not Thou who hast condemned us but we who have condemned ourselves." Here is the eternal sting of conscience, the sting that never dies. According to Zoroastrianism Justice and Man's Free Will are the arbiters of his fate, of his final destiny.

From all that we have stated above on the authority of the Zend-Avesta in regard to the proceedings of the Supreme Court on the Chinvat Bridge, we are led to the certain conclusion that our Scriptures maintain that our entire behaviour in this world will find a reflection in the other. The spiritual law corresponds with the natural law. Anything good or bad that we do, may not come back upon us in just the same proportion that we expect, but come back it will. Our belief or unbelief, our kindness or cruelty, holy life or dissolute life, will all come back somehow. The Zend-Avesta tells us that what we are in this world, we shall be in the next. Dissolution wears the body away after death but the faculties of our mind and soul will subsist without any change except of enlargement and intensification. The good of this world is the good of the next and vice versa. Good to the good, and evil to the evil. Such is the idea in our Zend-Avesta about the reflection of moral or spiritual thoughts and actions. In the future state, whether of rapture or ruin, the souls of the departed hear the reverberation of earthly things and doings. The wicked like the Bandvas, Kavis, Karapans, Usigs, Mani, Mazdak, dwelling in the darkness of Hell

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1 Dd, xxxi, 10-12.

hear from their own souls and from those of their followers, a wailing, despairing, agonising echo. Zoroaster and his followers, living in the brilliant light of Heaven, hear a glorious, transporting and triumphant note. Thus, the tremendous fact which we learn from the Zend-Avesta, is that whatever we think, say or do in private or in public, comes back to us in recoiled gladness or disaster.

After the judgment has been pronounced by the Supreme Court on the Chinvat Bridge, the soul of the righteous is greeted with words to the effect; "Welcome, enter the everlasting joy of Heaven." But the soul of the wicked hears the terrible sentence: "Depart from us into the deep abyss of darkness, Hell." Whereas the soul that is not wholly pure nor wholly impure is adjudged for a certain space of time to Hamistegân (Purgatory). Thus the Chinvat Bridge leads different souls into different places according to their deeds in the material world:—"He who is righteous, passes over the bridge on the ascent. If with an excess of good works his habits are correct, he goes even into Heaven (Behesht) and if with an excess of good works and correct habits he has chanted the sacred hymns, he goes even unto the Supreme Heaven (Garothmân) He who is of the wicked, falls from the lower end of the bridge, falls head fore-most to Hell and is precipitated unto that grade which is suitable for his wickedness. And he who belongs to the Hamistegân (Purgatory), goes thither where their place is."<sup>1</sup> "Deeds most just he will do towards the wicked as towards the righteous and towards him whose deeds of righteousness and falsehood combine (in equal number)."<sup>2</sup> "When the Kavi and the Karapan shall approach there where is the Bridge of the Judge, their habitation shall be for ever in the abode of the Druj or Angra-man."<sup>3</sup> "The souls of the wicked.....shall receive evil food and in the abode

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1 Dd. xx, 3 and 4.

2 Ys xxxin, 1.

3 Ys xlv, 11.

of the Druj (Hell) their dwelling shall verily be."<sup>1</sup> "The Karapans will deliver these (people) at the last by their teachings in the Home of the Druj (Hell)."<sup>2</sup> "But this was the reward which Zarathushtra declared unto (his friends and kinsmen)....." Ahura-Mazda will give you these gifts through the Good Mind in His Home of songs, Garônmâna (Heaven)."<sup>3</sup> "But songs of homage will I chant, yea to Him who will discern aright what things are lawful or unlawful....."<sup>4</sup> "May Piety (Spenta-Armaiti) give us through Thy Good Mind, blessings in reward for deeds."<sup>5</sup> "Him in our hymns of homage and of praise would I serve..Him who is Ahura-Mazda. And to Him would we bear praises in His very Home of songs (Garônmâna)."<sup>6</sup> "O Thou, Farshaoster Hvogva go where Piety joins hand in hand with the Righteous Order, where are the desired realms of the Good Mind (Vohûman), where Mazda dwells in His honoured Home."<sup>7</sup> "When spenta-man and angra-man came together (in man), it was determined that the long wounding and the worst life (Hell) should be for the wicked and blessings and the best mental state (Rehesht) should be for the righteous at the last."<sup>8</sup> "Then shall the blow of destruction fall on the wicked followers of the Druj but swiftly shall the righteous saints gather together in the happy abode of Ahura and Vohûmanô (the Good Mind)."<sup>9</sup>

The question is now reached which is so often asked : "What is the Future World like? Our reasoning faculty is unable to answer this question or to throw light as to the precise conditions of the World and the life lived there. However, if we turn to the Zend-Avesta, we find striking allegorical representations of Heaven and Hell of which the Future World is mainly composed.

1 Ys xhx, 11.  
2 Ys. li, 14.  
3 Ys h, 15.  
4 Ys. xlvi, 17.  
5 Ys. xlvn, 16.

6 Ys. xlv, 8.  
7 Ys. xlvi, 16.  
8 Ys. xxx, 4 and 11.  
9 Ys. xxx, 10.



Heaven is spoken of as a brilliant beautiful place full of lights and resplendent with precious stones : " I will bring his soul over the Chinvat Bridge, I, who am Ahura-Mazda, to Heaven and to Righteousness, the best and to the lights of Heaven."<sup>1</sup> " To whom Ahura-Mazda offered up a sacrifice in the shining Garônmâna."<sup>2</sup> " The whole collection of Staotayasnya prayers brings one up all the way to the blessed Garônmâna, the place beautifully made....."<sup>3</sup> " We, Ameshaspentas, will come and show thee the way to that world, to long glory in the spiritual world, to long (eternal) happiness of the soul in Paradise, to bliss and Paradise, to Garônmâna of Ahura-Mazda, beautifully made and fully adorned....."<sup>4</sup> " It (Heaven) is lofty, exalted and supreme, most brilliant, most fragrant and most pure, most supplied with beautiful existence, most desirable.....and the place and abode of the sacred beings. And in it are all comfort, pleasure, joy, happiness and welfare more and better than the greatest welfare and pleasure of the world and there is no want, pain, distress or discomfort whatever in it,.....the full and undiminishable space, the good and boundless world. And the freedom of the heavenly from danger and from evil in Heaven.....This prosperity and welfare of the spiritual existence is more than that of the world, as much as that which is unlimited and everlasting is more than that which is limited and demoniacal."<sup>5</sup>

" The soul of the righteous steps forth unto Heaven through the strength of the spirit of good works .....into the allotted station.....there where its place is And Vohûman, the archangel, makes it a household attendant to Ahura-Mazda, the Creator and by order of Ahura-Mazda announces its position and reward and it becomes glad to beg for the position of a household attendant of Ahura-Mazda through what it sees and

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1 Ys xix, 6.

2 Yt. x, 123.

3 Yt. xxiv, 28,

4 Yt. xxiv, 32 and 33.

5 Dd. xxvi.

knows."<sup>1</sup> "Up rises Vohû-manô from his golden seat and exclaims: 'How hast thou come to us, thou holy one from the decaying world into the undecaying one.' Gladly pass the souls of the righteous to the golden seat of Ahura-Mazda, to the golden seat of Amesha-spentas, tû the Garônmâna, the abode of Ahura-Mazda,.....the abode of all the other holy beings. As to the godly man, the wicked Daêvas tremble at the perfume of his soul after death. The souls of the righteous are gathered together there,.....the sovereign place of Eternal Weal.....'"<sup>2</sup> "At the fourth day dawn the holy, strong Sraosha and Rashnu-Râst and the good Vâe and Arshtâd and Mihir.....and the fravashis of the righteous and the other virtuous spirits come to meet the soul of the blessed one. And make the immortal soul pass over the Bridge easily, happily and fearlessly.....And Vohûman, the Amshâspend, introduces it to Ahura-Mazda and taking it by the hand make it rejoice as much as does the man who rejoices most when on the pinnacle of nobility and glory. And the fravashis of the righteous will bring to the soul of the righteous those blessed elements that are made.....The Amshâspend Vohûman will give to the soul of the blessed one clothes embroidered with gold and a golden throne."<sup>3</sup> "The first step that the soul of the faithful man takes, places him in the Paradise of Good Thought; the second step.....places him in the Paradise of Good Word and the third step it takes.....places him in the Paradise of Good Deed and the fourth step.....in the Paradise of Endless Light .....And Ahura-Mazda says: 'Let him eat of the food brought to him, the oil of Zaremaya; that is the food for the youth of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds.....'"<sup>4</sup> "In the proportion in which a man possesses good thoughts, in that proportion he obtains a high, a middling, or a low abode of happiness."<sup>5</sup> "There are three

<sup>1</sup> Dd. xxxi, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Vend. XIX, 31—36

<sup>3</sup> S. B. E. Vol. IV, Aogemaide. P. 376 and etc.

<sup>4</sup> Yt. xxiv, 61—64.

<sup>5</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol I, P. 61,

descriptions of mansions in the heavens : One of these is a mansion entirely without darkness, full of light, wholly good without evil, and joyous without any misery and the very highest mansion amongst them is named the Garothman-behesht and in the best part of it is the residence of the Creator Ahura-Mazda, the Ameshaspentas and other Ijads and of the Farohars that have not (yet) taken birth and of bright stars...''<sup>1</sup>

So we see through the above sentences that Heaven is the most desirable dwelling place. Within it are the brilliant thrones of Ahura-Mazda, of the Amshaspendas, the Yazatas and of the holy souls and fravashis of men and women, on which they all take their seats. Ahura Mazda, the Eternal Judge takes His seat on the most majestic throne of his power, the countless spirits arrayed about Him according to their respective ranks on their elevated seats. Ahura's throne and His presence heighten the splendor, the gorgeousness and the magnificence of the immense assemblage. The holy souls of men and women partake of spiritual food and of the most delicious drink called Zaremaya. They breathe the most pure, fragrant and sweet-scented air and live in the excess of joy and delight. In Garônmâna (Heaven) there are no wails of bereavement, poverty or sickness. But there reigns in it eternal delight and immense joy that spring through the songs of the holy souls who sing before Ahura and His brilliant assemblage. One of its transcendent charms is the ever rolling, ascending, chanting echoes of heavenly music. Thus the souls of the departed hear in Heaven the reverberations of earthly things and doings. They hear blissful echoes, ever accumulating, transporting and joyful. Almost the whole description of Heaven and its structure is possibly figurative. The place, the gates and the thrones

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<sup>1</sup> D, P, Dk. Vol. ii, Ps. 79 and 80.

are all meant obviously to illustrate the glories of Paradise and to raise before the mind's eye a figurative picture of what a place of eternal joy can be. The description makes us feel like James Montgomery: "When shall these eyes Thy heaven-built walls and pearly gates behold?"

The aim of the Zoroastrian Religion is of a two-fold character. To the follower of the Daêna (Law) or of Asha it promises not only a temporal happiness but a future everlasting spiritual recompense also. Moses, on the other hand, holds not only temporal prosperity as the reward for the observance of his law and temporal evils as the punishment for its transgression. What men aspire to and seek, is abiding or eternal felicity. Zoroastrianism comes to confirm in man this aspiration and to purify and ennoble it. Heaven is a sublime Kingdom (Khshatra-vairya) where men are to enjoy eternal felicity; where they are to receive abiding reward promised even for their smallest deeds on this earth. Garôthman (=House of songs), is the glorious goal for which every Zoroastrian must aspire.

We are told by the Zend-Avesta that the souls of the righteous whose thoughts have all been right always, whose words have all been right always, whose actions have all been right always, are able to climb the three steps of Heaven by their good thoughts, good words and good actions. Thus, according to Zoroastrianism there are souls in Heaven but carried there through the instrumentality of their own good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. In fact, men are the architect of their own Heaven, of their eternal happiness. The sacred Book says that none will be disappointed who longs to get into Heaven. There is a room for all who wish to be there; but in order to reach it, it is absolutely necessary that they take the path of Asha (Righteousness), the path of good thoughts, good words and good actions,

As the soul of the righteous ascends the steps, it is ushered into Heaven, the place where it first meets the welcome of the celestial inhabitants. Vohuman, the Amshaspend who is immediately next to Ahura-Mazda, first of all lovingly greets every new comer. He takes the righteous soul around to show it the wonders of that blessed Home. Vohuman says to the newly arrived : " These are the thrones of Ahura, of the Amshaspends, and of the Yazatas and of the holy souls and these are the holy souls " Thus the new-comer goes round amid the congregation of the celestial beings and the holy souls, and meets them and feels the greatest joy from their meeting and reunion.

According to the Zend-Avesta the future life is not simply a prolonged existence, an eternal monotony or a wearisome indefinite continuance of being. The future happiness is not a passive good merely as coming to us from outward sources like unto the delight we enjoy on this earth when free from thought or care amidst pleasant environments. Happiness in Heaven is not going to be an eternal stream of pleasure flowing from indolent repose. Wrong absolutely as is the idea of absorption into the Deity, it is entirely wrong likewise to look for rest in the misconceived Nirvâna. Even in this earthly life men do not look upon absolute rest as the acme of human felicity. The Zend-Avesta tells us that the happiness in Heaven is through activity. By the happiness in Heaven the true Zoroastrian should understand that state of the mind which the soul acquires by rising through acts of piety and virtue to the height of the thought of Ahura-Mazda and His Love. The happiness of Heaven is Asha=Righteousness diffused through and perfecting man's faculties, affections and energies. In conforming the human mind to the Supreme Mind doth the Zoroastrian Religion declare that there is the happiness of Heaven for men. No happiness is vouchsafed for men in the Future World which has not its germs in his own rectified

mind. The spring of all happiness is in the mind. True it is that all happiness is the gift of Ahura-Mazda but He gives it to man as a result of his own spiritual development, as a fruit and recompense of his own purity. We, Zoroastrians, are required by our Religion to acquire the highest spiritual development. In the world of Science evolution culminates in knowledge. And this is exactly what the Zend-Avesta, especially its Gathic portion, asks us to expect in the Spiritual World. In the Zoroastrian Religion spiritual development culminates in the best mind, in the best thought (*vahishtem-manô*). The best thought carries Heaven within itself and manifests that Heaven all around, because it carries within itself purity, wisdom and benevolence in their perfected form. "Ashâunê vashish-tem manô=For the holy is the best mind."<sup>1</sup>

To correspond, to commune with Ahura-Mazda through the best state of the mind and its perfected purity is the Eternal Life. It is this quality of the Eternal Life that alone makes the Zoroastrian Heaven. To the Zoroastrian Religion the Eternal Life has little to do with time. It is not mere everlastingness but it is Divine Communionship which the soul must look to in its search for heavenly happiness. Our holy Scriptures constantly and emphatically impress upon our mind the important fact that there can be no Heaven in the full sense of the word apart from the Presence or Nearness of the Supreme Being, Ahura-Mazda. To be in Heaven is to be where Ahura-Mazda and Vohumanô are. And to be where Ahura-Mazda and Vohumanô are, is to be in Heaven, to be in the condition of *vahishtem-manô* in which there can be no pain, no sorrow, no disappointment, no fear, no separation, no disease, nor death. The reward of the faithful consists of the everlasting vision of Ahura-Mazda face to face. And this vision with its concomitant eternal happiness every soul is

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<sup>1</sup> Ys, xxx, 4.

destined to attain to by the path of Asha.<sup>1</sup>

↘ All other heavens are fallacious or insignificant compared to the Heaven such as is represented in the Zend-Avesta. Homer's heaven, Elysium as he called it, was at the end of the world or under the earth where it never rained nor snowed and which was under the rule of Rhadamanthus, the most just among men. The heaven of Hesiod which he called the Islands of the Blest, was a place where flowers bloomed and the air was purple, where men had games and horse races and music perpetually. The heaven of the Scandinavian was the hall with its god Odin giving perpetual wine and suppers to the heroes and heroines that came up from earth. The Mohammadan heaven introduced its inhabitants through over the bridge Al-Sirat and once having entered it the inhabitants found themselves as in a riot of everlasting sensuality. The heaven of the American Aborigines is an eternal hunting ground. But what is the Zoroastrian Heaven? It is the vahish-tem-manô=the best mental state, the best mind. In it there is all light (anagrão raochão); there is in it no separation but reunion or meeting with all the holy souls that have gone out of this world and with the Almighty God, Ahura-Mazda (hamem-thwa hakhma).

Unfortunately, some Parsis believe, that Heaven is a vague thing. But the heaven such as we have just described above on the authority of the Zend-Avesta, satisfies our reason as a great invulnerable truism which finds belief with us even in our own experience and knowledge. What happiness can surpass our feeling at being able to be linked and united ever so more closely with the holy souls and with the Supreme Lord, Ahura-Mazda! What a help to be in the Divine Presence or His Nearness! What a glory to be always

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1 See my quotations in the foregoing pages.

approaching nearer and nearer to Him, to have the mightiest Leader near at hand, always inspiring us in the practice of virtue ! The entire aim and intention of our Religion (Dâênâ) is that ever and ever rising men at last do find Him: "Oh but a sight of Thee, O Ahura ! how rich should I remain, were I robbed of every other consolation."

How unparalleled in beauty, how cheering are the views of our ancient Zoroastrian saints and sages as represented in the Zend-Avesta about the holy soul ! We are told that the holy soul has been destined to survive the present order of the Natural World and to be transformed from glory to glory in higher regions beyond all adverse change. It must endure with firmness all trials, discharge all duties, fulfil the Law of Ahura and adopt as its own that cause of truth, right and justice which, being the cause of Ahura, cannot but triumph in the end over all powers of evil. Every soul that has sought, known and served the cause, is destined to be welcomed into Garônmâna and to be joined with Ahura-Mazda, with the Amshaspends, Yazatas and the whole brilliant assemblage of holy souls.

The Zend-Avesta does not tell us that our departed relations and friends are roaming adrift without aim or purpose. It is we under the sun who are wandering adrift; we who know not in the morning what will happen ere night fall. But the souls of the holy Zoroastrians are housed and secured, for ever safe in Heaven. How much condolence and comfort in the Zoroastrian thought that our departed friends have gone to a region where they have ample space and scope for progress and happiness with ever so great a capacity to love and to do good; gone where there are no bodily ills and temptations; gone midst the celebrities of Heaven, into the very presence of the King of Heaven, Ahura-Mazda; gone to meet the kindred who preceded them.



One great fact which Zoroastrianism has revealed to the world is that Ahura-Mazda created men as distinct individuals, stamping each soul with its proper personality which could never be effaced or possibly belong to another soul. The Zend-Avesta tells us that the separate personalities of the souls will be maintained in life hereafter precisely as they are here on earth. There they will not be reduced to one dead level; each will maintain the distinctive features of its own personality, features as are rooted deep into the very essence of the soul. The Religion of Zoroaster does not believe in the annihilation of the personality of man's soul. That belief is a Buddhistic idea. We are told by our Scriptures that the holy souls in Heaven shall be like the stars in so far that they have all a light independent of each other. We look up at night and see each star glowing in its own distinct glory. It is not like a conflagration of which you cannot tell where one flame stops and another begins. The stars are each of them distinct heavenly bodies; so is our individualism on this earth and it will not be lost in Heaven. Though in infinite multitude the holy souls will all be individually discernible and capable of recognition, each one with the account of earthly achievements adhering to its personality. All the holy souls in Garônmâna shine for ever and ever with distinct lights as do the stars in the sky.

There are passages in our Scriptures from which we gather still further important knowledge in this connection. We learn that the souls in Heaven possess perfect consciousness and memory and feel joy not only at their own but also at others' felicity, and that they gain new experiences and new resources of development. They perfectly recognise and communicate with one another. There is an enduring sympathy between the holy souls in Garonmâna where the access of mind to mind must undoubtedly be closer than upon earth. We are further told that the light of the glory of Heaven shall one

day so enlighten the faculties of the holy souls that they shall be able to see face to face Ahura as does Ahura see Himself.

No two cities on the earth are in more rapid or constant communication as this world and Heaven. The departed souls of the holy men and women and their fravashis take deep and incessant interest in this world where they lived. This view of our Scriptures does not militate against our own common sense. According to our Zend-Avesta our departed kinsmen and friends never forget us nor are they careless as to our affairs, and they watch us through our distress and happiness. There is consolation indeed in the Zoroastrian belief that our departed friends are as much ours as they ever were in this world: "Ahura-Mazda spoke unto Spitama Zarathushtra: 'Do thou proclaim, Zarathushtra! the vigour and strength, the glory, the help and the joy that are in the Fravashis of the faithful; do thou tell how they come to help me, how they bring assistance unto me.....Through their brightness and glory I maintain the large river, the sea Vournkasha.....the wide earth.....Through their brightness and glory.....I maintain in the womb the child that has been conceived,.....Had not the Fravashis of the faithful given help unto me, those animals and men of mine, of which there are so many kinds, would not subsist.....Through their brightness and glory a man is born.....the sun goes his way .....In fearful battles they are the wisest for help.'"<sup>1</sup> "If in this material world thou happenest to come upon frightful roads, full of danger and fears, recite these words: 'I praise, invoke and meditate upon.....the beneficent Fravashis of the faithful. We worship the Fravashis of the masters of the house, those of the lords of the boroughs, of the towns, of the countries.....who maintain the sky, the waters, the earth, the cattle.....who give victory to their invoker, who give health to the sick.....'"<sup>2</sup> "We worship the good, strong,

<sup>1</sup> Yt. xiii, 1—18.

<sup>2</sup> Yt. xiii, 21—25.

beneficent Fravashis of the faithful who come and go through the borough at the end of the year, at Hamaspath-maedha, they go along there for ten nights asking thus: 'Who will offer us a sacrifice? Who will meditate upon us? Who will bless us? Who will receive us with offerings? Of which of you will the soul be worshipped by you with a sacrifice? To whom will this gift of ours be given, that he may have never failing food for ever and ever.'<sup>1</sup> And the man who offers them up a sacrifice, the Fravashis satisfied bless thus: "May there be in this house flocks of animals and men! May there be a swift horse and a solid chariott. May there be a man who knows how to praise God and rule in an assembly, who will offer us sacrifices with meat and clothes in his hand and with a prayer worthy of bliss."<sup>2</sup> "We worship the life, conscience, perception, soul and fravashi of men of the primitive law who listened to the teaching (of Ahura), holy men and holy women who struggled for holiness.....We worship the souls of the holy men and holy women, born at any time, whose consciences struggle, will struggle and have struggled for the good."<sup>3</sup> "These good thoughts, good words, good deeds, these Haomas, offerings, Zaothras.....and the timely prayer with blessings, all these do we offer and make known with celebrations and present them to Ahura-Mazda.....to the fravashis of the saints and to their souls.....who are mighty and overwhelming for the help of the saints."<sup>4</sup> "I desire in my worship to approach towards every holy fravashi whosoever it may be and wheresoever dead upon this earth and I desire to approach toward the fravashi of my own soul in my worship with my praise."<sup>5</sup> "We worship all the fravashis of the saints and the souls of the dead....."<sup>6</sup> "Blind are all those who on this earth do not follow the religion, do not benefit the living and do not commemorate the dead."<sup>7</sup>

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1 Yt. xiii, 49—52.

2 Ibid.

3 Yt. xii, 148—154,  
Ys. iv.

5 Ys. xxiii.

6 Ys. xxvi.

7 S. B. E. Vol. iv, Aogemaide 50.

Now let us see what sublime thoughts, doctrines, and lessons the above-given quotations teach us. In the first place they tell us that there is no warrant in Zoroastrianism for the assumption that in the future life the holy souls of the dead are to be bereft of all that they justly and rightly held dear in this world. We, as true Zoroastrians, must believe that they carry with them all their recollections of the loved ones whom they have left behind. This world where they began the development of their moral being and first heard the voice of conscience and where they fought the battles of life and won their victories, must ever be dear to them. The friends who blessed them and the friends whom they blessed, can never be banished from their minds. True, for a season they have parted from them, but they cannot forget them. In Heaven they are even in greater sympathy with their kinsmen on earth than they ever were. With the privilege of nearer excess to Ahura-Mazda than they would enjoy in this world, they remember those whom they once loved and invoke in their petitions and prayers blessings of Ahura on their afflicted kinsmen and friends on earth. They are waiting for the moment to welcome them when our souls shall depart from the body and rising upward will stand on the heights of Heaven.<sup>1</sup> Does it stand to reason that living as they do a more mature and perfect life in Heaven in the midst of all embracing friendship and companionship of Ahura, the holy souls can ever shake off concern for those whom they loved below on this earth? The holy souls that enter the Spiritual World and attain to freedom from the alloy of selfishness which tarnished their love on earth, glow with a love the depth whereof we in our mortal state cannot distinctly conceive. We are persuaded by the Zend-Avesta that it is a great error to conceive of the departed souls that they are so absorbed in their new mode of life in Heaven as to forget their former one.

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1 Yt. xii.

According to our Book death cannot break the bond which joined a Zoroastrian in this world to his family, community and his country. Death cannot put an end to his wishes and efforts for their welfare. Sympathiser, worker or sufferer as he may have been for his country, community and his family on this earth, his interests and affections for them outlive the sun and the stars and are perfected in Heaven.

From the various statements of the Zend-Avesta, especially of Yasht XIII, it is clear that the holy souls and fravashis come from the spiritual world to mortals here below and hold with them an active and beneficent intercourse. They come to them, render them services and assistance. To defend, cheer, and rescue men in this world, to foster what is good and overthrow evil, that is the chief office of the holy souls and their fravashis of the Garôthmân Behesht. Having done their duties they return to Heaven with their share of satisfaction or sorrow as the case might be.

According to the Zend-Avesta many a soul is in Heaven that now enjoys the eternal recompense of its labours and sacrifices; and is looking down from its celestial throne with satisfaction on such of his good deeds as have found elaboration or perfection through other hands and other hearts from among those living on this earth. The reward of the holy soul is ever on the increasing according as the influence of their example and work contributes to good conduct and righteousness in others in this world.

Zoroastrianism tells us that nothing will escape the strong grip of the celestial faculty of man, called memory. If a man in this world helps a disabled cow to partake of grass, or assists the poor and the needy or teaches good principles and impart knowledge to the ignorant or does such charitable deeds, all these will endure in the everlasting memory of the man who does such kindness to others and will for ever become the

true and main source for the enjoyment of the happiness of Heaven. According to our Scriptures not only will such deeds endure in the everlasting memory of the charitable man but also in the memory of those to whom the man shows such kindness.

We are constantly reminded by the authors of the Zend-Avesta that the righteous (ashavan) shall be in everlasting remembrance. What are mundane rewards, eulogiums, and biographies compared with the records imperishably engraven in the illumined memories of souls after death and in the memory of those to whom they have extended during worldly life kindness in thought, word or deed? Forget them, they can never. Neither the giver nor the receiver of such kindness can ever forget it. No act of kindness done by you, reader! is ever forgotten; but will stand in your own memory and appreciation and in the memory and appreciation of others as long as Heaven will stand.

Oblivion is an old monster that swallows down everything. It swallows individuals, families, communities, states, nations, continents, hemispheres, worlds. Its diet is made up of years, centuries and of ages. This monster is no other than the forgetfulness which prevails on this earth where everything is lost eventually into oblivion. Families disappear and their memory vanishes for all times from the mind and memory of men. So do generations of human beings disappear and are forgotten. Cities perish; empires break up never to be remembered again after a time. But while this universal submergence of earthly things goes on, who really likes to be forgotten? Not a single man certainly. Absent from home for some weeks or months it cheers us to know that our people there remember us. We thus all like to be remembered even after death and we are surely remembered and will be distinctly and vividly and gloriously remembered millions, billions and trillions of years. Our Zoroastrian Religion attacks the monster

of Oblivion. It enables us to realise that we build everlasting remembrance for ourselves by the acts of kindness that we do to others. Oblivion as such cannot exist. For when we rescue, help, uplift or save an individual or by right influence help in transforming a bad man into a good man or a disheartened man into a courageous man, every stroke of that service done by us will be immortalised in the character of that man. There may never be so much as a line in newspapers regarding it, nor a tongue may utter a word about it but wherever that soul exists, the influence of the service we have rendered it, will exist.

It is well known that Zoroastrianism is distinguished for the ardent veneration with which it cherishes the memory of the good work of departed holy men and women. It has done a lot of good to its followers by perpetuating the examples of those who have struggled and worked for the good and wholesome development of this world.<sup>1</sup> Our hearts find consolation and joy in the remembrance of that great multitude of holy men and women to whom Zoroastrianism had given birth.<sup>2</sup> We, Zoroastrians, pay honour to the holy men and women, that is, to those whose lives on earth were signalised by an eminent degree of virtue and whom we now believe to be in Heaven in the very presence of God.

Holy men and women are the friends of Ahura-Mazda. It is but natural for us to rejoice when a friend of ours is honoured by others; in the same way Ahura-Mazda who is a friend of all departed holy souls, desires that honour should be accorded to them by us who are living. Such veneration and honour paid to deceased holy men and women carries with it no thought of worship; it implies no more than a tribute of respect paid to those who are worthy of it.

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1 Yt. xiii,

2 Yt. xiii,

Men in order to uplift themselves need some sort of an inspiration, a model or an example to follow or imitate. Thus, for example, lovers of poetry like to belaud the work of their favourite poet; lovers of philosophy take delight in proclaiming themselves disciples of a great philosopher; lovers of music wish to exalt the names and the fame of great musicians. So lovers of Zoroastrian virtue desire to venerate, honour and imitate all those whose lives were pre-eminently dedicated to the practice of virtue. In our striving after perfection example counts for much. We, Zoroastrians, take for our model Zoroaster and all those after him who by their saintliness attained to the highest eminence. Though we may not be able to vie with them in their perfection, the thought of them rouses us to nobler efforts.

We, Zoroastrians, pay honour and veneration to such men in various ways: by invocation, presentation and prayer. We commemorate them; we recount them by their names and their deeds whenever we perform ceremonies for the dead or for the living. Such honour which we pay, is in accordance with our Avestan Books and our Traditions and is a part of the reward which is due to the dead for their deeds. Such honour paid does our own-selves much good in as much as it incites us to the imitation of their noble example. We long to honour beings who partake of our own nature but in its highest form. And what is it in the holy souls and fravashis of holy men and women which is fitted to impart to us the purest and most enduring delight and incitement? Their moral excellence. We all know the stimulus which the mind receives from the commemoration of holy saints and sages. To contemplate and love excellence is to be inspired by it. Attachment to an excellent being is itself an excellent thing. There is always an inherent wish in the human soul, an ardent thirst for deeds of virtue and piety. Having known perfectly well this good trait of human nature, our religious



teachers bade their disciples to honour, remember and invoke the best and the noblest of our race, the best men and women who have lived the lives of saints and heroes and have furthered by their actions and prayers the material, moral, social, and spiritual welfare of mankind, and by reflecting upon the lives of such men to make themselves familiar with their life-history and make their good deeds flow little by little into their souls.

We maintain communion with such holy souls and *fravashis* by such grateful remembrance through our ceremonies of *Afringân*, *Stâm*, *Farôkhshi*, *Bâj* and so forth. These ceremonies, moreover, enable us to keep before our mind the past history of our beloved Religion as of its holy founders and promoters, from *Gayômar*d and *Zoroaster* downwards to the holy and charitable persons of our own times. We, Zoroastrians, love to concentrate our mind on the pure and pious souls. We feel ourselves in personal debt to the faith and loyalty of these staunch followers of our Religion and bless them for their work on behalf of the spiritual cause of the world wherein we daily enjoy the fruits of their labours. Thus in our beneficent ceremonies of *Afringân*, *Stâm*, *Farôkhshi*, *Bâj*, *Yazashne* and in the prayers connected with them we maintain a connection with the holy souls that have gone out of this world and risen to glory just exactly as we do with those yet dwelling on this earth. How noble and exalting is the idea underlying these ceremonies which are performed in hundreds of Zoroastrian families almost every day? How happy and joyful must we feel at being thus able to open our minds to the influences of the departed holy men and women who have preceded us into Heaven? How delightful to think in our prayers of the spiritual worth and sublimity of these souls?

In the course of these ceremonies and their prayers Zoroastrians not only maintain a connection with their departed kinsmen and friends and with all holy souls in Heaven but still more closely do they bind themselves to them by hope, in so

far that they eagerly anticipate a future existence in which they shall meet the venerable souls of the departed.

Before concluding this subject of Heaven it is necessary for me to observe that I would not have dwelt so long upon this communionship between the souls of the Heaven and the earth, had I not believed that this Zoroastrian doctrine is an eminently practical one. The duty of a religion is not over with the inculcation of ordinary rules of conduct and discipline. In fact, the most practical service which a religion can do, is to awaken the loftiest sentiments in men and raise in them the noblest springs of action. The subject so far discussed is peculiarly fitted to strengthen our convictions of the Spiritual World and to lift up our minds above sordid desires. The attractions of Heaven lie in the beings who reside there. And whilst the thought of the Presence of Ahura-Mazda, the Supreme Being in Heaven is enough to inflame intense desire, the conception of our Creator's House, Garônmâna, as the mansion of all those holy beings, all those good souls whose lives have purified and civilized this world, is itself not a little enlivening. In proportion as we associate and communicate in our thought with the glorious assemblage in Heaven, do we learn to elevate our own spiritual capacities which alone can fit us for its society.

Unhappily, speculations of this kind seem to many as not only wanting in practical utility but as unreal products of imagination. Whatever goes beyond our worldly experience, passes with such men as visionary and romantic. The Spiritual World is to them a fiction. But it has been quite plainly defined and satisfactorily revealed to us by our Scriptures and by our Traditional Literature. And to the mind which is spiritually inclined and that can rise above earthly things, the description given above about the connection between the living and the departed, between Heaven and Earth, will appear to be both sober and rational as well as joyful and exulting.

Every race, all the world over and in each successive age, has felt a natural impulse to maintain relations of one or another kind between the living and the dead. This is as clearly shown in the case of the rude savage as in the cultured European. Zoroastrianism recognises and provides for this innate impulse by its teachings concerning the invocation, presentation and prayers for the pious departed souls.

However, it should be well borne in mind, that while the main idea of Zoroastrianism is that we may hold communication with those who have passed into the Spiritual World, there is not the slightest trace found in the Zend-Avesta of the idea that disembodied souls make their presence known by audible sounds and by becoming materialised; that they make their presence known to us or that they communicate their messages to us through the moving and tapping of tables or other articles of furniture or through writings or through the agency of persons who are supposed to be particularly susceptible to the influence of the disembodied spirits or souls and are thus capable of transmitting intelligence and information from the Spiritual World to this earth. The holy authors of the Zend-Avesta seem to have never imagined or dreamt of a trance medium, a sound medium or of a writing medium. On the other hand, the whole tenor or tone of the Zend-Avesta seems to condemn the belief in all such mediums as present facilities for artful and unprincipled persons to practise gross and dangerous deceptions upon others. Even a superficial student of the Zend-Avesta will find for himself that it not only requires us to condemn but to suppress and destroy from the world the drug (falsehood), deception, or fraud of every kind and in any form. Therefore it is sinful for a true Zoroastrian to put any faith in such modes or mediums as are preached and practised by the Society of Spiritualists. The Spiritualist having an ardent desire to connect himself in thought and interest with those whom he loved and who have now gone

before him, having a longing for continued intercourse with those whom he loved on earth, has taken to vagaries which our Zend-Avesta and our common sense reject. The Zoroastrian believes in a spiritual world and in a world of spirits. He believes in the continued life of the departed. He believes that they are not annihilated, not slumbering but are alert and conscious. He believes that they know and take part in the affairs of this world, in the affairs of their friends and relations and try to help them. He considers himself bound to commemorate them and never to forget them. He looks forward to joyous meetings, to gladsome reunions. Their departure must have left a vacancy in his soul so that he can never get used to their absence. But he consoles himself with the thought that he shall meet them again in the land of salutation and reunion. He knows that he shall find home with them and shall welcome those who will come one by one to receive him into Heaven. Thus far he knows and believes in regard to connections and communications with the departed ; but not further.

After Heaven comes in rank and position in the other world, the place called Hamistegân. According to our Book it is the place where the souls of such departed men and women go and dwell as have done in this world deeds that are good as well as bad, as have done as many evil deeds as good ones. Such souls are able to improve and become entitled to enter Heaven. After they have sincerely and seriously repented of their evil deeds, after they have resolved to do only righteous deeds and have carried out their resolutions, they get and enjoy all the privileges and rights of all those that live in Heaven.

Finally we shall proceed to speak of Hell. In the Zend-Avesta mention is made of Hell in several passages. The truth of the existence and reality of Hell forms part of that great body of doctrines on which the whole fabric of Zoroastrianism is built up. Our Zend, that is, our Tradition,

under the guidance of our Avestan books, teaches us this truth in the most explicit language.

Now what is Hell according to Zoroastrianism? It is a place for punishment. We find an authoritative declaration in our Book that a place of punishment exists. Human reason apprises us of a truth to which the Zoroastrian Revelation attests, namely, that there exists a place of punishment where every sin meets with unending penal retribution. Reason itself can adduce grounds for believing in the reality of punishment. What value is to be attached to the conceptions of justice and right if there is no other world in which the balance is truly adjusted. A wise legislator decrees that the violation of a given law shall be followed by the infliction of a corresponding penalty in order that rash and thoughtless minds may be more securely restrained and taught to obey. Has Ahura-Mazda, the Supreme Law Giver, acted differently? He is inconceivably good and merciful but He is also inconceivably just and impartial. We learn from the Zend-Avesta that man is destined by Ahura to the possession of eternal joy. What must follow if he voluntarily renounces the destiny? If man treads the right path, joy and only unending joy awaits him everywhere; but if he voluntarily abandons the divinely-appointed path, he not only foregoes that joy but voluntarily condemns his entire being to undesirable and unlimitable torments (*ashm vanghuim vanghvê akem akât*=good to the good and evil to an evil end). If man's life is good, its end is good; but if it is bad, its end is bitter in this world and bitterer still in the other world or in Hell (*anghush achtshtë dragvatām*). Zoroastrianism distinctly tells us that the fruits of sin are not only reaped in the material world but also in the spiritual. The penalty of sin is not exhausted in the dissolution of the body.

We are told by our holy Book among other things that Hell is a deep abyss below the Chinvat Bridge. It is variously

referred to as "the lowest part of the world," "an abode of darkness," "the worst life," "the absence of life."<sup>1</sup> We are further told that in Hell there is foul air, foul smell, foul food and foul drink: "The souls (of the wicked) shall come (in Hell) with evil food and in the abode of the Druj their dwelling place shall be verily."<sup>2</sup> "In the proportion in which there is evil thought in man, in that proportion he obtains the abode of fear (Hell)."<sup>3</sup> "Another is a mansion lightless, dark, devoid of any goodness, devoid of any joy, wicked, miserable and black; the meanest and uneven part of it is the residence of Angra-mainyu and of law-breakers and of others who come across the protection of the world....."<sup>4</sup> "That man is owing to his connection with the evil path of perverse intelligence, of the evil religion and is owing to the sinful efforts of Angra-mainyu, fitted to be a prisoner in the mansion of perpetual hardship and of complete pain. Such a man is not for himself."<sup>5</sup> "The apostate demon-man is doomed to undergo affliction and imprisonment in the infernal abode, is dragged away into the hellish dwelling, there to be killed in the vengeance taken for the pious. The soul of that sinful wretch will ever remain clamouring and tortured and degraded on account of his devilish acts. From such confusion of a man of a demonical nature there is rejoicing unto the genius of the evil religion. In the association with that evil spirit such a one has to suffer for ever the gnawing and biting of the surrounding pernicious creatures. The evil-willed Ahriman is ever jealous of the salvation of the wicked or of the happiness of the righteous."<sup>6</sup> "Be it known that men's life becomes eternally miserable by communion with the evil Angra-man; and their final habitation is the infernal regions of Angra-man."<sup>7</sup> "The nature of Hell is sunken, deep, and descending, most

1 Ys. xxx, 4; xxxi, 20; xxxii, 13.

2 Ys. xlix, 11.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. i, P. 61.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. ii, P. 80.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. iv, P. 215.

6 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 407.

7 D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 461.

dark, most stinking and most terrible, most supplied with wretched existences, the place, the cave of the demons and fiends. And in it is no comfort, pleasantness or joy whatever; and in it are all stench, filth, pain, punishment, distress, profound evil and discomfort.....“ And so much more grievous is the evil in Hell than even the most grievous evil on earth as .....; and more grievous is the terror of the punishment of the soul than the vileness of the demons of the body.....”<sup>1</sup>

“The soul of the wicked on the fourth night after passing away, its account being rendered, rolls head-foremost and totters from the Chinvat Bridge and Vizares, the demon conveys him cruelly bound therefrom and leads him into hell. And with him are the spirits and demons connected with the sin of the soul, watching in many guises, resembling the very producers of doubt, the wounders, slayers, destroyers, monsters and criminals, those who are unseemly, those... . who are biters and tearers, noxious creatures, windy stenches, glooms, fiery stenches, thirsty ones, disturbers of sleep.....And in proportion to the strength and power of his sin, they surround him uncomfortably and make him experience vexation.....He comes willingly into the hell, becomes a household attendant of the evil one (Angra-man), is repentant of the delusion, is a desirer for getting out of hell and has a wonderful desire of good works. “And his food is as a sample of those which are among the most fetid, most putrid, most polluted and most thoroughly unpleasant and there is no enjoyment and completeness\*in eating but he shall devour with a craving which keeps him hungry and thirsty.....but which increases the rapidity and tediousness of his anguish. “The locality in Hell is not limited and that punishment comes upon him from the friend and spirit of his own sin in that proportion and manner in which he has harassed and vexed others and has served that which is vile.”<sup>2</sup> “There is something about the

1 Dd. xxvii.

2 Dd. xxi, xxviii, xxxii, xxxvii, and etc.

darkness, the intensity and far-reaching bottomlessness of the blackness and the absence of good in hell; the proximity to stench, sleet-pelted clambering, frozen advancing, painful condition, distressed state and awful fear of those in hell....."<sup>1</sup>

As we have seen in the fore-going pages, our Scriptures tell us that on the condition of man's life in this world depends his condition in the next world. When man dies, then at last the veil that dimmed his vision of truth, falls from his eyes and he sees clearly the true story of his life and its true meaning. As I have shown before on the authority of our sacred Book, the whole record of man's life is entered in the Great Book, in the Book of his own Conscience. Even those who are good, will have also to undergo an audit of their accounts. In the Book all their expenditure of the capital entrusted to them, all expenditure of personal energy, of influence, of time, of money and material resources, are most carefully and accurately entered. Acts of charity, alms, kind thoughts, words and deeds are set down to the credit of the good. Work, all of whatever kind, does most certainly count. Ahura-Mazda looks to and considers all the circumstances under which anything is done, under which a sin is committed.<sup>2</sup> All these individual entries which record sinful thoughts words and deeds, are not reckoned to the advantage of the sinful soul when it undergoes its trial on the Chinvat Bridge. Then, in the clear and searching light of the trial the soul exclaims in the bitterness of its heart upon its folly in having followed the ways of falsehood (druj, angra-man) rather than those of truth (asha).

When that hour is at length come, when every charge against it is proved, the sentence is passed. The Yazatas

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<sup>1</sup> S. B. E. Vol. xxxvii, Ps. 209 and 210,      <sup>2</sup> Ys. xxxi, 13.



Srosh, Rashnu, Meher and others together with Ahura-Mazda and man's own conscience bear their part in pronouncing that sentence. The sinful soul is condemned to Hell.

• The guilty soul fails to cross the Chinvat Bridge at the end of which Heaven is situated. While trying to cross it, the soul falls down into the deep abyss of Hell; because the Bridge becomes so narrow on account of the guiltiness of the soul that it becomes impossible for the guilty soul to pass over it. Then, also, feverish restlessness, remorse bordering on despair, the thought of self-destruction rush in upon the sinner. On its vanishing from the Supreme Spiritual Court on the Chinvat Bridge, a frightful company of devils seem to make their furious onset upon it, each contending with the other as to who shall have the glory of making it his prisoner and of dragging it down to Hell. What a terrible awakening is that when the eyes of the soul are opened and it finds itself clawed by demons, bearing it to the torments of the dark abode. Nothing is left by which it can drown its feelings in forgetfulness or sleep.

Dādistan-i Dīnīk, the Dīnkard, Vendīdād IV, 49-55, Yasht XXII, Minōi Khirad II, Ardāvirāf and other Zoroastrian writings speak of the gloomy recesses of Hell, of its frightful spectres, of its various instruments of torture such, for instance, as nails, daggers, arrows, brimstones, the rivers of burning fluids, the ovens, the gridirons, the saws, the clubs and other instruments for racking torments and cruelty. They speak of scorpions, snakes, dragons and such other poisonous animals and insects that constantly attack and torture the sinful souls that cry out in anguish and gnash their teeth. They gnaw their own tongues for pain, they devour their own flesh, rend their hair and mangle their faces because of the sufferings that are unbearable.

Let your eye picture to itself the sinners in Hell tortured in various ways, let it picture to itself the visions fraught with terrors of every kind; let your ear hear the wails and shrieks of pain and despair, the groans of woe and the impious mockery of evil spirits; and let the sense of touch seek to realise what the agony must be, every vein of man being wrung with suffering; let the most revolting conceptions form themselves in your mind and you will have an adequate idea of the real horrors of Hell as represented to us in the Zend-Avesta.

But the question is: "Do the condemned souls in Hell suffer from bodily punishments such as are described in some of our books or from spiritual punishments? Are the words and expressions of the descriptions figurative or are they to be taken literally? Of course, they are figurative. They are intended to arouse in our minds the idea of the torment and retribution which await the proud despiser of the Law of Ahura. The authors of the Zend-Avesta make use of the figurative language which is after all in close correspondence with reality in order to fortify us against the allurements of the bodily world. The figures of speech are designed to bring us face to face with the most awful conceptions which the mind of man can entertain and to implant in us the certain belief that Hell is most truly a place of punishment.

All the punishments and the instruments of punishment mentioned in some of our Scriptural writings are the peculiar inventions of man. They are different and unworthy of Ahura who is infinitely wise and of unlimited power. Ahura-Mazda in His indignation against the sinner displays His justice in the most signal manner. His justice does not fall short of exacting punishment. His punishment is surely of a nature to exceed man's way of punishment and affords us a proof of the vast inequality subsisting between the weakness of mortals and the Omnipotence of Ahura-Mazda.

The Zend-Avesta, especially its Gâthic portion, distinctly points out that Ahura-Mazda punishes the sinner through his own memory and conscience. It is man's guilty conscience that flings him in Hell ;<sup>1</sup> such a conscience is Hell itself. Oh! the power of conscience when it is aroused ! What whip of scorpions over a bed of spikes it creates, what ghosts it gives birth to in one's mind to deprive it of its rest ! " And thus, Brutus, amid his slumbering host started with Caesar's stalwart ghost," What made Belshazzar's teeth clatter with a chill when he saw a finger come out of the black sleeve of the midnight and write on the plastering? Conscience! Conscience. God present at the retrospection and conscience with stings, conscience with pincers, conscience with fails, conscience with furnaces, conscience with scorpions and snakes, is upon him. The terrors of an outraged conscience are in themselves an eternal punishment for sin. The punishment is eternal or everlasting because the soul and its faculties, namely, conscience and memory, the two spiritual instruments through which Ahura-Mazda punishes the sinner, are immortal, everlasting or eternal.

What must be the feelings of the condemned soul that is excluded from the society of the Yazatas, the Amshâspends, from the communion of the blessed holy souls, from Garô-nmâna of all perfect bliss and thrust down to the lowest depths of the abyss below the Bridge that it may dwell there with the evil spirits not only for a few days but for long and indefinitely long periods. The feelings of that soul and his ignominy and shame must be such as to madden it for ever, to goad it to the most frantic acts of desperation, to torment it for ever more than any kind of penal torture or persecution.

In the Zoroastrian Hell are sighs and groans, cries and shrieks, but there is no being there to show the guilty soul pity ; in it are sorrows and lamentations but there is none to hear and console. We see in this world that some palliative has been

provided for every human suffering. There is not a wound without its balm, not a poison without its antidote. But in Hell the sinful inmate suffers with thirst but there is no liquid to quench it; there the hunger is ravenous, but there is no food to satisfy it. But the worst of all for the condemned soul in Hell is that there is no death to put an end to the misery in which it lingers. It is not allowed even the hope of so dismal a remedy as its utter annihilation.

We know that in this world even our amusements, when unreasonably prolonged, grow irksome. We therefore place limits upon our feasts, upon our games and exercises. What, then, must it be to have to abide through ages in the same state of sufferings of various kinds? What must be the misery of the sinful soul in Hell surrounded by scorpions, by the folds of serpents, insulted by the demons?

No good can come out in Hell from its multitude of companions? It cannot possibly make the condemned souls of any assistance to each other. They hate each other as they hate the demons that are the chief causes of their sufferings. They have no power to avenge themselves on the demons. The demons are the executioners of the condemned men but the condemned souls are not the executioners of the demons. The demons have their punishments but the condemned souls have no hand in punishing them.

The condemned souls lift their eyes to Heaven and when they see that the holy souls in Heaven enjoy that happiness which they forfeited, how deeply they mourn and groan? And all this is trifling when we compare the agony with which the condemned souls burst when they see how the blessed in Heaven, instead of coming to their relief, rejoiced over their sufferings; when they see that not only holy men and women but all the heavenly spirits were turning them to ridicule and deriving pleasure from their misery.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ys. ii, 18.

Besides these terrible sufferings of the condemned souls, as pointed out in the Zend-Avesta, we learn from it that in Hell Ahura-Mazda withholds from the condemned souls the vision of Himself. It is this which constitutes the supreme sufferings of the Zoroastrian Hell. In a word, the condemned souls in Hell feel themselves quite alone in a lonely place; they feel themselves without sympathy, without help, without companionship and therefore feel so miserable that they like to be able to tear themselves to pieces, to utterly destroy themselves and to cease to exist.

• Having known what those punishments are which the sinner's soul has to undergo, surely it is every one's business to do his best to avoid them. Hell, as it is described in our Book, is enough to overwhelm man with horror. Many a wise man has admitted that frequent meditation upon death, Judgment and hell is needed to ensure in men steadfast perseverance in good. Man is a child that must necessarily be disciplined. The fear of punishment is a wholesome element in the upbringing of the young. The fear of suffering is ingrained in every sentient being. Wise men's primary injunction to us is "Fear nothing but what is rightly to be feared." Under many circumstances fear has a greater compelling power than love. Where fear of punishment reigns, sin has no access. Life has its difficult moments when higher motives seem shorn of their power to influence our minds. At such times the knowledge of Hell's eternal punishments is calculated to lend us strength in the combat with the allurements of this world. It helps us at such a moment to summon to our aid the thought of an eternity of torment.

We sometimes hear some people, mostly atheists and infidels, say that they fear nothing of the consequences of their sins in the next world. They defy the Judgment Day and scoff at the idea that there is any future punishment awaiting their

sins and with impunity they pursue their life of immorality. The one idea which they hate in our Scriptures is the idea of retribution. But let the idea of future retribution and punishment be once taken away from a society or community, either educated or uneducated, and it will very soon begin to disintegrate. Let the fear of Hell and its punishment be banished from the mind of man and he will very soon turn this world into a Hell.

Is there then no relief or release from such punishment? As I have said more than once, according to Zoroastrianism the sinner should sincerely repent and resolve to do always nothing but good. That is what he should do and this will have the certain effect of so composing his conscience as to remove from him much of disquietude.

Thus in every view of it Zoroastrianism is a religion of hope in so far that it gives to man that consolation which he needs amidst the disappointments he is liable to meet with on earth. To Zoroastrians life is not a cheerless waste, nor death a king of terror. He lives in the kingdom of hope who follows the Zoroastrian Religion and acts up to its principles. The distinctive character of Zoroastrianism can well be summed up in a single word,—Hope. Hope is the outstanding feature of the Zoroastrian system which distinguishes it from every other religion and system of morality which has been offered to the world. We find in the Zend-Avesta the best kind of optimism. There is no pessimism about it, no sickening despair of life, no doubt as to its noble aims and purposes. Zoroaster was the most marvellously hopeful of teachers and the Zoroastrian saints and sages, were the most hopeful of preachers. The remaining part of this chapter will be principally occupied in describing what this hope is. By statements and arguments based on the Zend-Avesta we shall try to show and prove that Zoroastrianism is the glorious Religion that has all the elements in it to make men truly hopeful, active, useful, prosperous and

progressive. The truth of this remark is substantiated by the Zoroastrian idea of the Resurrection. ( Rustâ-khez ) and the Renovation ( Frashô-kereti ) or the Final Change. In its idea of Future-Life, Resurrection and Renovation Zoroastrianism holds out to man a promise of eternal progress, and shows man as a being of infinite possibilities. " We are faulty; but are capable of progress and improvement " In that thought, as Westcott has said, Robert Browning found "the basis of a firm belief in the continuity of personal life through death." The hope which this idea kindles, enables man to rise to the height of noble ideals, and through them to be worthy of communion with his Lord in Heaven.

The Zoroastrian faith in Immortality rests on the Resurrection. The idea of Resurrection is an original idea with our religion and gives it quite a distinctive colour. Our Scriptures tell us that after the separation of their bodies the souls of men retire to the supersensible world. Death separates the soul from the body; the man ceases to exist as a natural being, the earthly course is run and nothing now remains but for the soul to await the moment when on the Day of Resurrection the world of Ahura-Mazda shall reunite it to that same body of which it constituted the vital principle.

Death is natural to man but the severance of soul and body is none the less a sharp and bitter experience. Ahura-Mazda has destined man to partake of Immortality even as regards the body. According to the Zend-Avesta our body is no less immortal than the soul; at the Command of Ahura it will rise again from the dust. Out of the bones of the dead shall rise the bodies of our loved ones most purified and irradiated. " .....Armaiti gave a body.....And for Thy faithful let (that body) be (at the last, for the time of Resurrection), O Mazda, as it was....." <sup>1</sup> " O Mazda ! tell me

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1 Ys. xxx. 7.

the excellent words and the excellent works, that through the good thought and the holiness.....O Lord ! make the world of Resurrection appear at Thy Will, under Thy Sovereign Rule.”<sup>1</sup> “ Ahura-Mazda made the creatures so that they may restore the world,.....when the dead will rise, when life and immortality will come.....”<sup>2</sup> “ Near the time of the Renovation the bodily existences desist from eating and live without food; and the offsprings that are born from them, are those of an immortal, for they possess durable and blood-exhausted bodies. Such are they who are the bodily-existing men that are in the world when there are men passed away, who rise again and live again.”<sup>3</sup> “ The preparation and production of the resurrection are an achievement,.....a sublime act,.....a wondrous appearance unto the creatures who are uniformed .....” “.....As it is easier to teach again learning already taught and forgotten than that which was untaught, and easier to repair again a well-built house given gratuitously than that which is not given, so also the formation again of that which was formed, is more excellent and the wonder is less than the creation of creatures. And through the glory and wisdom of the Creator.....that which was to perish, is produced again anew and that which was not to perish.....is produced handsome .....”<sup>4</sup> “Finally, there will be a decrease of afflictions and..... the Creator, Ahura-Mazda will restore life to men (that have departed this life). The sinners will be purified of their sins and the vicious dissociated from their vices; and men, defiled with sin, will after being made pure by the purificatory (laws), and being exempted from punishment, become beings of a high order.”<sup>5</sup> “ All persons ought to regulate their duties (concerning) the Renovation, the Creation of the Creatures, the Resurrection and the Final body.....The Resurrection shall be

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1 Vend xi, 14.

2 Yt. xix, 10 and 11.

3 Dd. xxxiv, 3 and 4.

4 Dd. xxxvii, 3-6.

5 D. P. Dk. Vol. ix P. 627.



achieved in the case of him who knows that he will be brought back in (this world) by Him by Whom he has been produced. And the Final Body shall be achieved in the case of him who knows (that he is) to go (back) whence he has come."<sup>1</sup> "It is revealed by the good religion that in the final 57 years perfect goodness unalloyed with evil shall prevail in the world and just before the Resurrection all men for their fidelity to the Mazdayasnian Religion, shall be renovated by means of their good or virtuous deeds....."<sup>2</sup> "Then shall begin the infinite time (of happiness) and then shall happen the final Renovation and.....the Resurrection of the dead and the attainment of the final body and the redemption of the people of this world, and hence mankind shall live in eternal felicity and in splendour and with immutable wisdom, will and action and time."<sup>3</sup> "They may restore the world which will never grow old and never die, never decaying, never rotting, ever living and ever increasing, master of its wish, when the dead will rise .....When the creation will grow deathless....."<sup>4</sup>

The Gathâs, be it noted, speak mainly of a purely Spiritual Resurrection. In all other portions our sacred Book speaks of the reconstruction of the body and tells us that it will take place at the time of the Resurrection. Is it not more in harmony with reason to believe that Divine Justice will summon not the soul alone but the whole man, both soul and body, before the final Judgment Seat to give account of the good and evil man has done?

There are many things in our Book which are obscure. However this much is made clear in it that the body which rise again, will be the same body as we are vested with in our present life. That same body which clothes us here, will clothe us in the world to come. But what the precise limits of

1 D. D. Dk. Vol. xiii, Ps 22 and 23.  
2 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 277.

3 D. P. Dk. Vol. v, P. 332.  
4 Yt. xix, 11 and 12.

their similarity may be, we do not know. It is clear that we cannot anticipate the continuance of those same physical conditions in another world which prevail in the material world about us. The same body will rise again but under wholly different conditions.

Our bodies will be returned finally to our souls, not as they are now with their weaknesses and with all their susceptibilities to exhaustion, fatigue, hunger and thirst. Ahura-Mazda will reconstruct them much better than they are now. But whether it will be out of natural disintegration that we shall get the improved, purified, buoyant, gladsome, magnificent, brilliant body called the Resurrection Body, is what we cannot say. And let it be observed here that it is foolish to linger among the details of a subject into which we are given no power to enter or to inquire and of which it is only the broad lines that concern us.

The authors of the Zend-Avesta have shown that the same life-principle can clothe itself in altered bodily semblance; nay more, that very meaning of what seems to be death in the natural world, may be only a transition to a future life, clad in a more perfect organism. The transformation does not mean loss of identity. For while the body is to be changed from a body of flesh to one of glory, the individual will not disappear.

At the end of the world, as our Scripture tells us, by the order of Divine Omnipotence the dead will be summoned to stand before Ahura-Mazda and His Supreme Court for Final Judgment. They will be summoned thus: "Arise, you dead and come to Judgment....." In response to these summons all mankind will appear and stand before Ahura and His Court. The Final Decision will be given by the Court and the good souls will be sharply divided from the evil souls. Every conscience will be laid bare in the clear light of truth and before the eyes of all. Each separate circumstance, each separate deed

in the life of individuals, of families, and of nations from the beginning of the world to the Last Change will become visible. All will be made manifest ; the virtues and merits of the good, the depravity and guile of the unjust. Of the latter utter shame will be the portion and of the former honour and glory ; unspeakable joy will be for the holy and appalling sight for the wicked. Thus the whole human race with its body and soul together is to stand before Ahura-Mazda at the time of the Final Change.

According to our Zend-Avesta, as I have said once before, man is no mere unit or isolated atom ; he is a member of a family, of a community, of a state, one with all humanity. It is fit therefore that man, not the individual man only, but the whole human race which exhibits so visible a solidarity as to constitute it one world-wide family, should appear and stand before Ahura-Mazda's Seat of Judgment. A public act of Judgment as this is in accordance with Divine Justice.

Thus it is a part of our Zoroastrian hope that at the Final Change the departed souls shall not remain in a disembodied state but shall be clothed in bodies uncorrupted and incorruptible and glorified and that the souls shall be in fellowship and friendship with Ahura-Mazda and with all previous kinsmen and friends. Whatever mystery is involved in the thought of the future of our bodies, we are promised that these bodies shall be our own. In them we shall recognise ourselves and one another in unmistakable identity. We are told that the Resurrection will bring up faces that were to us once and in our memories are now dear. Can we think of anything more hope-inspiring than the reappearance of those near and dear to us from whom we have been parted ?

Thus, then, we find in our Zoroastrian hope the feature which distinguishes it from all other systems of philosophy or religion which deny that the personality of the soul is main-

tained in the next life as in this world. Our Zoroastrian idea has nothing in common with the Hindoo or the Buddhist's theory of a relapse into non-existence, or with that which goes by the name of corporate Immortality. Our Zoroastrian hope bids us think of Immortality not as a vague and shadowy state of blessedness in some unknown existence after death but as the realisation of those possibilities of perfection which our nature contains and are present here even in the earthly life of man. It would not compensate me for the extinction of my personality at death, to be assured that I had gone to swell the tide of life for future generations. I cannot be satisfied without a hope for the future which does justice to myself and assures me that I, a complete person, body, soul and fravashi, shall hereafter partake of the highest happiness in Heaven in the presence and sight of Ahura-Mazda.

Again, nothing is so characteristic of our Zoroastrian hope of Immortality as the element of restoration and recovery. There is so much indeed that men would like and need to recover in the life to come,—opportunities, friends, and kinsmen, both the body and the soul purified and glorified, and the friendship of holy souls and the friendship of Ahura-Mazda. In the Zoroastrian hope of Immortality there is the further promise that all these shall be recovered even to those who are condemned to Hell. The promise is that the sinful souls condemned to Hell as well as those holy souls that are disappointed and disheartened in this world, shall get fresh chances after death in the next world to conquer evil and recover happiness in Heaven: "The Amshâs spend unite with Armaiti in bestowing a body upon the newly created soul. And the saint breaks in with the prayer that in the future and possibly at the Farshôkard (Renovation period), the completion of progress, these created souls might possess such advantages as they had when Ahura came at first with his acts of creation; that they might be restored

again to a state of sinless happiness, provided with bodies by Armaiti as at the first. But vengeance shall come on the wretched beings who choose the Evil Mind as their master. And it shall come, not in the abstract but as executed by a numerous party, the offsprings of the Evil Mind. And when this shall have been completed, then, as he declares with enthusiasm, 'to God shall be the Kingdom,' a Kingdom established in the Divine Benevolence, which will pervade its organic life.....And the loyal citizens (of the Kingdom) will then not only defeat the Lie-demon, who is the life of the Daêva-party, but they will deliver her up as a captive to the great Genius of Truth, the personified Asha. And, as he ardently hoped for the coming of the Kingdom into the hands of Ahura, he ardently beseeches that he and his coadjutors, the princes, may be honoured as the immediate agents in bringing on this 'millennial completion'..... "Once more he announces the certain defeat and chastisement of the incarnate falsehood and her adherents, which enables him only impressively to describe the rapid reunion of the righteous amid the home-happiness of Heaven. ".....He commends his hearers for learning the holy vows of the Religion on account of the duration of the announced rewards and punishments. They shall be long indeed; and upon their complete inauguration full salvation shall be realised for those who shall have learnt and listened to the invaluable truths."<sup>1</sup> "The saint prays Ahura-Mazda that He may exert that Sovereign Power (Khshathra-vairya), which is alone supremely efficient (and which) by its holy laws and spiritual arms can alone bring on the Frashokard and produce that condition in society in which all human progress shall have become complete."<sup>2</sup> "This I ask Thee, Ahura! tell me rightly, how shall I deliver the Druj into the two hands of Asha to cast him down to death through Thy

<sup>1</sup> S. B. E. Vol. xxxi, Ys, xxx, Ps. 27 and 28.

<sup>2</sup> S. B. E. Vol. xxxi, Ys, xxxiv, P. 82.

Māthras and to send mighty destruction among her evil believers, to keep those deceitful and harmful oppressors from obtaining their object?''<sup>1</sup> "When shall come, O Great Creator! the Saoshyants to hold the Righteous Order of the world upright and forward pressing."''<sup>2</sup> "When shall our Perfected Piety come together with Thy Asha....." "The Saoshyants.....through Thy Vohūmanō shall go hand in hand with mental sharpness by doing every deed of Thy commandment, O Ahura! through the help of Thy Holy Order....."''<sup>3</sup> "To the holy man Ahura-Mazda will bestow through His Divine Power that which is better than the good, while on the withholders of the sacrifice..... He will send worse than the evil in the last turning of the creation in its course."''<sup>4</sup> "I conceived of Thee as bountiful, O Ahura-Mazda! when I beheld Thee as Supreme in the Creation of life, when I beheld Thee as the Rewarder of the words and deeds, Thou didst establish evil for the evil and happiness for the good at the time of the Final Change in the creation."''<sup>5</sup> "They may restore the world which will never grow old and never die, never decaying, never rotting, ever living and ever progressing." When the creation will grow deathless...the prosperous creation of the Spenta-Mainyu (God).....and the Druj shall perish,.....she and her hundred-fold brood shall perish, as it is the Will of the Lord."''<sup>6</sup> "The fiend.....saw the beneficent actions by which.....And he returned inside to fall disarmed and alive and until he shall be fully tormented and shall be thoroughly experienced, they shall not let him out again.....and the same fiend and the primal demons are cast out confusedly, sorrowfully, disconcertedly, fully afflicting their friends,.....with lengthy slumbers with broken down deceptions and dissipated resources, confounded and impotent into the perdition of Ahriman, the disappearance of the fiend, the annihilation of

<sup>1</sup> Ys. xlv, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Ys. xlv, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ys. xlviii, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Ys. li, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Ys. xlviii, 5.

<sup>6</sup> Yt. xix, 11 and 12.

the demons and the non-existence of antagonism. "To make the good creature again fresh and pure and to keep them constant and forward in pure and virtuous conduct is to render them immortal and the not letting in of the coexistent one (Angra-man).....And His (Ahura-Mazda's) means are not the not letting in of the fiend, but the triumph arranged for himself in the end...the endless unlimited light being also produced by him and the constantly...beneficial space that is self-sustained .....the creatures which are requisite for the final, legitimate triumph of the well-directing creator and for the termination of the struggles of all by the protection and recompense of the praises and propitiation performed, which are the healing of the righteous and the restoration of the wicked at the Renovation (Frashôkereti). "He also produced the creatures as contenders,.....in the struggle for the perfect happiness from heaven at the renovation of the universe and he made them universally contended.....he produced a durable immortality for the living.....The army of Yazatas, judiciously and leasurably fighting for the good creatures of the sacred beings... valiantly, strongly.....and completely triumphantly struggle for a victory triumphantly fought. For Ahriman the demons are procurers of success in the contests till the end, when the fiend becomes visible and the creatures become pure. "The coming forward of sickness and death unto the creatures of the sacred beings occurred when the fiend rushed in and he rendered the existence of men sickly. "And the importance of sin is owing to the destruction of the fiend by the perception of light.....They (men) see all, they all forgive and they all are powerful as regards all things. And moreover, after the three days (at the time of Resurrection) all the creatures of the good Creator are purified and pure by the perfect washing passed through by the most amazing preparation ordained and by the most complete account they render complete. And they are triumphant over the fiend through their own weapons, through their own driving away of their own littleness and

since he (fiend) becomes exhausted in resources they make him become extinct..... " And after the Renovation there is no demon because there is no deceit ; and no fiend because there is no falsity ; there is no evil spirit because there is no destruction ; there is no hell because there is no wickedness ; there is no strife because there is no anger ; there is no hatred because there is no ill temper, there is no pain because there is no disease ; there is no want because there is no greediness ; there is no shame because there is no deformity .....They are all those of evil thoughts, of evil words, of evil deeds, a race of all evils to be made to tear by the evil spirit. " And on the disappearance of the demon every evil has disappeared, on the disappearance of evil every good is perfected and in the time of complete goodness it is not possible to occasion any pain or distress whatever, by any means to any creature. Those who are present sufferers when there is a blow of a fist on the body, or the point of a nail is driven into a limb, are pained on account of the combination of a different nature for the purposes of the fiend in the body. But at the time of no complication (of Resurrection and Renovation), when a limb is struck upon a limb, or even such a thing as a knife or sword or club, stone or arrow reached the body, there is no pain or discomfort whatever corresponding to that present pain....." " Now the pain from that beating and striking is always owing to that different nature and on account of their being suitable to it, but at that time everything being of like nature and like formation there is never any distress..... " And in that most happy time they let the sun, moon and luminaries exist but there is no need for a return of the day and a removal of its going forth, for the world is a dispenser of all light and all creatures are brilliant ; those luminaries also become as it were perfectly splendid for them. And every creature is of equal power and of like will ; whichever were mortals, unenvious of the welfare of all creatures, are alike joyous and that share of their pleasure and position rejoices them which has come to



them from the glory of all the existences and capabilities of him, the all-good who is aware of all of everything through his ~~own~~ perfect persistence and complete resources. "And moreover all the angels, the souls and the guardian spirits are attending to the wishes of the glory of the Creator and the Commands of the Creator without trouble and fully rejoicing... And they have comforted and decorated the creation. And the angels, souls and guardian spirits.....are thereby pleased and rejoiced eternal and thoroughly prepared they are naturalised..... is that complete joy."<sup>1</sup> ".....By the propitiation and strength of the Izads and grief and destruction of the demons the spiritual existence will be perfected and the material existence will be improved and by the perfection of the spiritual existence and the improvement of the material existence the creation will be connected with the epoch of the Frashôkereti (Final Renovation) and the occurrence of that Renovation (will be) owing to the purity and goodness of the world....."<sup>2</sup> "Be it known that all improvement of self to attain to an exalted condition in Paradise is for the time of future Renovation.....It is declared in the Religion that the souls in Paradise are in an undistressed condition and these invisible spirits that are the inmates of Paradise, ever improve themselves so as to be worthy of the perfect felicity of the future Renovation. Accordingly this world is a region wherein sufficient improvement can be acquired to make man worthy of both (viz. Paradise and Tane-pasin=the Final Imperishable Embodiment.)"<sup>3</sup> "All worldly existences will be purified before the end of that limited time. Thus the Lord will overpower the destroyer in the end. He will turn back all His creatures to Himself.....He (Ahura) will embellish the world with joy by means of His fresh (renovated) treasures from the source of good."<sup>4</sup> "The fourth period is

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1 Dd, xxxvii.

2 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, Ps. 367 and 368

3 D P Dk. Vol. vi, P. 400.

4 D. P. Dk. Vol. vi, P. 415 and 416.

said to be of Hoshedar ; the fifth of Hoshedar-mâh and the sixth of Soshyos during which the demons and drujas will be finally worsted and Ahuramazda's creations freed from hell and by a miracle there will be Frashô-kereti or Final Renovation and men will become immortal."<sup>1</sup> "Finally there will be a decrease of afflictions and the Preserver, the Creator, Ahura-Mazda, will restore to life the men (that have departed this life). The sinners will be purified of their sins and the vicious dissociated from their vices ; and men defiled with sins, will, after being made pure by the laws and being exempted from further punishment become beings of a high order. Pious men by the merit of their works will obtain the good everlasting recompense. And owing to all men abstaining from sinful acts, punishment will be done away with and good recompense will be their portion. And all men will live in the condition of immunity from afflictions. Ahriman and the other Daêvas will not remain (that is, there will be no wicked men in the world) and Druj (evil) will be repulsed, overthrown and slain. All harm will be removed from the good creation. And all people will continue to be in the state of innocence—pure, faultless, connected with the supreme glory, free from affliction, ever joyful and progressive."<sup>2</sup> " They considered this, thus : " From Hell a path goes to Paradise and it is always most well-redeeming where there is every kind of salvation in regard to this world and those (only) tread on the path who have suffered something for sins and from Hell they pass on to Paradise."<sup>3</sup> " All persons ought to regulate their duties concerning these four : the Renovation, the Creation of the Creatures, the Resurrection and the Final Body. The Renovation shall be achieved in the case of him who becomes estranged from the evil principle. The Creation shall be achieved in the case of him who entirely does that thing whereof the thinking, speaking

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. vii, P. 472.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. ix, P. 627.

<sup>3</sup> D. D. Dk. Vol. xii, P. 9.

and performing are good. The Resurrection shall be achieved in the case of him who knows that he will be brought back in this world by Him by whom he has been produced. And the Final Body shall be achieved in the case of him who knows (that he is) to go (back) there whence he has come."<sup>1</sup>

We cannot help remarking in this place that all the above statements which have been made on the authority of the Zend-Avesta in regard to the Zoroastrian doctrine of the Future Life, lead us to the certain conclusion that in Zoroastrianism there is no trace of the doctrine of Reincarnation, Transmigration or Nirvâna. It does not require for any man much effort to be convinced of the incomparable superiority of our doctrines over the beliefs aforesaid of the theosophist. Either our ancient Zoroastrian saints had no idea or knowledge of the theories of Reincarnation, Transmigration and Nirvâna or perhaps they knew them and yet rejected them by ignoring because of their having been found and proved absurd, unreasonable, unbelievable and misleading : "In the scheme of the good religion there are three doctrines. One of them has reference to life in this world in the flesh ; the second is about the invisible world which is to succeed the bodily state ; and the third has reference to the work of Frashôkant or Frashôkeret at the End (or Final Change). As regards the first he who is a worshipper of Mazda or of God, acts properly according to law.....and having knowledge of the ills and pains affecting his body, keeps himself happy.....As regards the second doctrine relating to the immortality of the coming world, after the bodily state has been ended, has reference.....The last doctrine as regards the Frashokant has reference to the well-meaning design of the Creator regarding the End ( or Final Change ). It contains excellent precepts regarding the purification of the good dispositioned creation and the plucking out from mankind the Blemish-giver ( angra-man ) and breaking

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1 D. D. Dk. Vol. xiii, P. 23.

his powers of rendering (men) sinful and untruthful and the imparting of complete purity from the pollution of sin to the souls of transgressors that have been rescued from Hell and improving their enfeebled condition into the eternal immortal nature of the souls of holy men and making them highly lustrous so that no one from the creation of the Self-existent might render himself greedy through greed."<sup>1</sup>

We learn from the Zend-Avesta that at the time of Frashô-kereti souls that are perfect, will enter and live in bodies as are perfect. Even the condemned souls will become at the time hallowed and glorified and will enter their own glorified bodies. Every human soul will become a new source of life to the body it will inform—a life which has ceased to be natural. By the operation of Divine Omnipotence the body will enter into the possession of all those spiritual attributes which are in harmony with its glorified state. It will become immortal, free from the limitations which natural life imposes and endowed with heavenly beauty and radiance and possessed of a fulness of power to which neither matter nor space nor time can set bounds. Such will be the glorified life, as our Scriptures tell us, which will be the portion of every human soul after the Resurrection and the Final Change or as it is called the Restoration (Frasho-kereti). Every man will be able to enjoy the highest happiness after that great Event.

We learn from the Zend-Avesta that in all the work that will have to be done before and during the time of Ristâ-khêz and Frashokereti for man's highest happiness the Being that will take the principal part, will be Ahura-Mazda. We learn from it that the sole aim and object of Ahura-Mazda in creating man is his perfection and happiness. We are taught by it that the human soul has two central principles which are especially fitted to raise it to Ahura-Mazda. There is in every

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<sup>1</sup> D. P. Dk. Vol. II, Ps. 87 and 88.

human being an insatiable desire for happiness and there is a still profounder and more urgent impulse, the longing for perfection, for deliverance from evil, for perpetual progress, the desire to realise in character the bright ideal which all noble souls conceive.

The Zend-Avesta, especially its Gâthic portion, forcibly impresses this great truth that the perfection of the human soul is the only spring of man's true happiness. And verily it is a glorious Book; for it reveals to man the true way to perfect happiness. It teaches him that Ahura-Mazda regards the soul of man with unutterable interest and love. He delights to perfect his character. He has made him just with the purpose of imparting to him His own character. The Zend-Avesta teaches us that as Ahura lives, we are to live for ever; and our connection with Him shall be for all future ages through eternity. Many a passage shows us that Ahura-Mazda momentarily and for ever surrounds man with His instructions and guidance for his perfection and happiness; that under every circumstance the voice of His wisdom follows him; that He supplies man with unexhausting means of growth, progress, perfection, and happiness, always and everywhere.

As we reflect upon human nature, we find that man's moral perfection is his true and lasting happiness. Really, no other Heaven than that which is found in our own perfection, would be one worth living in. This is a truth given by our Religion, so transcendent that it deserves to be ever so persistently and earnestly borne in upon man. This is the highest truth that a religion can preach.

No doubt, as I have said above, Zoroastrianism tells us that to man there is but one essential lasting good, and that is, the healthiness, power and purity of his own soul. However, it should be borne in mind that this Zoroastrian doctrine which states that the perfection of the soul of man is his only happi-

ness, does by no means interfere with the other great truth revealed by the Zend-Avesta that Ahura-Mazda is the supreme source of man's eternal happiness. It is quite evident from our Scriptures that God is the supreme source of man's happiness; but such happiness is not bestowed by God in the form of a profusion of gratifications and blessings so that man may enjoy them in a passive and idle condition of mind and body. God is the author of man's happiness in so far that He awakens man's mind and heart to continual action so that he may compare God's character with his own and imitate Him and be like Him by concentrating the strength of his mind and body upon His Goodness and Perfection, by adopting His Will as his own and by approving and choosing Asha for his conduct in life. In a word, it is by the elevation which Ahura's Perfect Character imparts to man's character that Ahura asserts Himself as the supreme source of his happiness.

Closely related to the two principles above mentioned there is another equally important which is also very often and impressively kept up before our mind by the Zoroastrian saints. We learn from the saints that the whole doctrine of Zoroastrianism is nothing else than an invitation to ceaseless growth and progress. We are taught under it to go always forward, and never backward even if we had the choice. There are many passages already quoted in the foregoing pages expressive of this progressive principle, the constant force, the impellent energy that developed and impelled the spiritual man and will develop and impel him onward and upward in the path of progressive development of human activity. We are told that the Soshyants (Penefactors) have continued to come to us from the remotest ages and will continue to come until humanity will reach perfection, until all spiritual humanity will reach the altitude of spiritual development, that is, until the time of Resurrection and Renovation when in every normally and fully developed man and woman Spenta-man will obtain a rightful

ascendency or supremacy through the complete dominancy of the Law (Daênâ=Dîn) of Ahura-Mazda revealed by His Prophet Zarathushtra.

• In the work and character of his life at Bactria Zoroaster had held out to humanity a practical example of moral perfection involving as it did not merely the exercise of vigilance at the actual moment of choice between good and evil but also an abiding and habitual inclination toward what was virtuous and good. And it was at Bactria in the system which he preached that he laid the foundation of progress both personal and social, and of the true well-being, alike of the individual as of the race.

Zoroaster's Religion enlightens us as to the true meaning of progress showing us that this consists in an increasingly perfect fulfilment of life's ordinary duties. According to it quality and not quantity which is the measure of progress and perfection. Progress is not to be gauged by those exterior things which are beyond our control. It lies in the steady diminution of sins and faults voluntarily committed, in the subduing of passions, in the acquisition and practice of virtues, in the performance of deeds pleasing to Ahura-Mazda and in the endeavour to acquire that perfection which Zoroastrianism demands from its followers. The true Zoroastrian is warned again and again by the authors of the Zend-Avesta to strive for such progress and to make it unremittingly ; because life brooks no stagnation. Man is for ever undergoing change, and is for ever in a position to shape his whole being, body and soul, for the better or for the worse. For the attainment of perfection, both moral and spiritual, man must always make in the course of his life an infinite effort at progress, though this he can achieve only by slow and gradual steps.

We notice from the statements in regard to the Sosh-yants that in the history of man there have been and will be taken incessant steps in the ever advancing progress of his

material and spiritual self. The statements about them indicate so many different epochs in the evolution of man. The process still goes on and must go on until every sinner is awakened, improved, purified and saved in deference to the good Will of Ahura-Mazda, until he has reached the highest point of purity and is worthy of admission into the Supreme Heaven.

According to the Zend-Avesta there are men who can live as certainly as some of us do, the noblest life upon the earth and such men enjoy the highest happiness which they deserve. But by far the greater majority of men do not live such a life. Our Book says that these latter are not lacking in possibilities of the perfection for which they have been originally designed by God. The possibility of living the highest life has never been lost to them. This possibility shall ever go with them and await execution till they are able to reclaim themselves. And they shall have reclaimed their life just as soon as they are in complete harmony with and obedience to the Law (Dm) of Ahura-Mazda.

The great truth which Zoroastrianism preaches is this; that although men fail by their own vices,.....such as, disobedience ( *asraoshtim* ), discontent ( *unâkhshtim* ), pride ( *tarô-maitim* ), falsehood ( *mithaokh dhem vâchem* ), and uncharitableness ( *arâitim* ), to attain the highest life with its concomitant happiness, the moment that they cast the vices aside and devote themselves to the virtues of obedience ( *srâosha* ), love, peace ( *akhshti* ), humility ( *ârmaitish* ), truth ( *arshaokh dhô-vâkhsh* ), charitableness ( *râitish* ) and through these to Ahura-Mazda, the lost possibilities will reappear; and they will begin to realise and attempt to live up to the highest ideal of this life. And when this change shall come over them, when their souls shall realise and desire the highest life for which Ahura has destined them, then come upon them the other great change. Those very forces and circumstances



which once hindered them from living a good life, shall now change back again to their true purpose and shall be once more their helpers. Everything shall be altered when they alter their character and conduct towards their Creator, Ahura and His creatures. Their new life will be an energetic life of the plainest goodness. It will be a life into which a new driving force will enter. At the time of Frashô-kereti the faith in Ahura and eternal life shall be revived. The most wonderful machinery invented or the most sublime production in art or architecture will no longer then, as now, raise admiration in others. During Frashokereti i. e. the Renovation the place of honour will be held by the greatest moral achievements and by the greatest victory of good over evil, of virtue over vice, of spenta-man over angra-man.

The Zend-Avesta teaches that man has a nature that lives not upon material food alone but on spiritual nutriment also; in other words, the spirit of man needs to be nourished by qualities as would make it worthy of the communion with Ahura-Mazda; in other words, by a development of the faculty called spenta-man. As I have more than once shown, there is according to Zoroastrianism in man's nature the essential faculty, called spenta-man. Whether in life man uses and develops it or not, at last, as the Zend-Avesta assures us, he feels the urgent need to exercise that faculty and will seek and experience the greatest happiness and joy in doing what that faculty was meant by Ahura to do and will be able to avoid evil and live the eternal life and fulfil the final purpose of his life and hope.

And what is the crowning hope of life? On what person or thing does the true Zoroastrian centre his final hope? There is but one great Being, Ahura-Mazda Whom to see and imitate is the crowning hope of every human soul. Every man hopes, or rather should hope that in the life beyond he

shall see Ahura, that clearly beholding Him he shall be like Him wholly and perfectly. And according to the Zoroastrian Religion every man is destined at one or another period of his eternal life to be able to attain fulfilment of this hope and through it to achieve the highest happiness. For such happiness, however, the highest perfection is necessary; for such perfection, infinite progress, for such progress, an infinite life, and for such life, an infinite future.

We are told by the holy authors of our sacred Books that Ahura-Mazda's Mind has planned and provided beforehand all these contingencies and therefore conformably to His Wishes all things shall come off gloriously in the end. Everything eventually will reach a good and divine end, that goodness, truth, obedience, justice will gain victory at the end, that man's mind will be steadily set towards right, so that though he be involved in tempests after tempests in feeling and thought, he shall be so much more benefited by the education and experience which these tempests impart to his whole nature, till at last purged through suffering and conquering evil by the strength of his will and moral force he arrives at the happiness which is the highest and the best. All this in its turn is based on the clear conviction of our Scriptural writers that Ahura-Mazda is Himself all goodness and that it is quite impossible that He should ever permit evil.

Thus, when the last souls have risen through perfection to Ahura-Mazda and to His Heaven, i. e. when all the souls some of whom have been carried away by the mad excesses of their love or hatred, some who have been the victims of pride, some the slaves of avarice, some immersed in sensuality will have obtained not only forgiveness for their iniquities but such an eminence of glory as will leave for them no room to envy the condition of others who never like them ran into excess of wickedness then the ladder which leads to the invi-

sible from the visible, shall be taken away; there will remain no bridge as at present between earth and heaven; there will then be the promised Resurrection followed by Frashokereti, Restoration to Eternal Perfect Happiness.

The Zend-Avesta tells us that the two worlds (Geti-Material World and Minoi=Spiritual World) will some day reach the state of perfect mutual harmony and cooperation. Such unity of heaven and earth would be accomplished not as a ready-made gift dropped out of Heaven without effort on the part of our earth in its accomplishment, but as the result of their mutual cooperation the fruit of the combination of forces on the higher and lower planes for the furtherance of highest spiritual ends. Thus will take place that far-off spiritual Event, (Frasho-kereti) to which the whole world is moving. Some day thousands of centuries off when the old world shall be far older still purged ever so more of its moral and physical evils, it will be given to all men and women to behold and meet the holy inmates of the invisible world and to seek and live the same righteous life which they are living in Heaven.

As regards the promises and prophecies of our Zoroastrian saints in connection with the great Events of the Ristakhêz and Frasho-kereti we will now try to find if there are any proof or sign of their being fulfilled; whether there is a possibility that the events can take place as they are predicted in our Book.\* In our modern world and in the general struggle of its men there seems to be more spiritual and moral tendency than in any previous period of their history. Men are now influenced ever so more than before by great ideas and principles, by conceptions of a better state of society so that the Right of Human Nature may be better recognised and greater justice may prevail among men.

Again we find that the present world is tending morally and spiritually towards everlasting Progress and Perfection.

Though for ages people will take recourse, as they do now, to infidelity and irreligion as a refuge from superstition and witch-craft, yet we need entertain no doubts as to the final results, the Final Change, the Final Restoration (Frashôkereti), that is, for the final triumphs of Spenta-man, viz. of Asha, of Truth, Right, Virtue, Piety.

The one encouraging thought that supports the truth embodied in these prophecies and the promises is that the drift of centuries past has been towards gradual betterment, with but occasional reversals. The world and all it contains, undergo steady progress though it may be with some intermissions. Man also, like all other creatures, is progressive and does really progress with time. He goes onwards and higher but so very gradually that he is hardly able to see and appreciate all at once and distinctly that he has reached so high an altitude. Man has been continuously marching onwards along the path of life, soaring higher and higher until he shall have reached the supreme acme of benediction to which he is destined to rise, until he shall have occupied the highest elevation above level of the sea of want and misery upon which millions of past generations had tossed.

But, as the Zend-Avesta tells us, before man has thus reached the highest elevation, a tremendous amount of spade-work must be done through the efforts of his own will and power. He must raise his soul from the depths of sin to a state of exalted holiness by his own individual efforts aided by the help of Ahura-Mazda.

So, according to the Zoroastrian Religion, man need not despair of attaining to the highest point in holiness. He is wrong if he thinks so meanly of himself as to think otherwise. Many things which a person in a state of health is capable of performing, seem to him impossible, quite impossible in sickness, for example, to run, wrestle or skip. Let the sick man

wait only till he recovers and he will be able to do every one of these performances. So a man with hope shall possess quite another power, another spirit and another heart who wishes to improve morally, and then the angra-man in him will no longer be able to tempt him.

To earnest minds the difficulty of comprehending the doctrines of Resurrection and Renovation has always proved great. Philosophically one scarcely sees either the necessity or the possibility of the Resurrection and of the Renovation, of Ristâ-khêz and Frashô-kereti. But science does help us to understand why a man should grow better and wiser until in his own right he enters the abode of Ahura.

What is the difference between a stone and a plant? They have both of them much in common. Both are made up of the same atoms. Both display the same properties of matter. Both are subject to the physical laws. But in addition to all that the stone has in itself the plant possesses something more, a mysterious something called life. The plant is tenanted by something which is new, an unique possession added over and above all the properties common to the stone and the plant, and that is life.

This instance we have quoted, helps us in our thought as to the distinction or difference between the man before the Frashô-kereti and the man after it. The man after it will come to possess something new, most unique. He will become possessed of a new and distinct and superior endowment. And he will have a distinct superior kind of spiritual life added to all the other phases of life that he manifests here in this present world. He will live a kind of spiritual life infinitely more distinct than is the active life of a plant distinct to us from the inertia of a stone.

But it may well be asked here : What is this something new which enters man's soul in the Spiritual Life? What is

this unique endowment in man's vital essence? And the answer that is obtained from our sacred Volume is brief. It is *vahishtem-mano*=the best mind obtained from Ahura-Mazda by the human soul through its conformity to *Asha-Vahishta*=the Best Righteous Order, the conformity which comes to man through the highest efforts and his best prayers.

Thus, having shown that the Zoroastrian doctrine of the Spiritual Resurrection at the time of the Final Change of the world is not incredible, groundless or without truth, we now proceed to show that the Zoroastrian doctrine of the Resurrection of the body is equally credible, well-founded and capable of proof.

We are told by our Zoroastrian saints that out of the bones shall come the bodies of our loved ones not damaged but most highly glorified. We are not told that the reconstruction of the body in the Resurrection will take place in the same order in which it was made at the first.

We know there are many who refuse to accept this doctrine because they find it impossible and difficult to understand and explain. But the following pages will help them to become convinced that we find nothing in the important Avesta and Pahlavi statements concerning the *Ristâkhêz* that is not possible or which is difficult to understand and explain.

We are told by our holy Book that in the beginning of man's creation Ahura-Mazda made Gayômar'd a perfect man. He made him out of the earth. If then out of the ordinary dust of the earth and without any model God could make a perfect man surely out of the dust of the mortal body and with millions of models before Him, Ahura can vest every one of the human race with a body and make him a perfect being at the Resurrection. Certainly the last undertaking would not be for

God greater than the first. There can be no more mystery about the resurrection of the body at the end of the world than about the body's first existence.

• Another consideration makes the idea of the Resurrection easier still. If we hear the phonograph, we hear it unroll some voice that talked into it or sung into it who may have been quite dead and gone whilst we hear his speech or song. We turn the plate and there come forth the very tones, the very accentuation, the very song of the person that sang into it once and is now dead. If man can do that, cannot Ahura-Mazda, the Almighty God, bring back to you the voice of your departed friends and kinsmen. And if he can return to us the voice, why not the lips, the tongue and the throat that gave forth the voice? And if the lips and the tongue and throat are brought back, why not the brains that suggested the words? And if the brains, why not the nerves of which the brain is the centre? And if he can return to the dead man his nerves, why not his muscles and the bones? And, so, why not the whole body? Thus, then, if man can make the phonograph, Ahura can make the Resurrection.

The question now is: Will it be the same body that on the last day shall be reanimated? Yes, but infinitely improved.<sup>1</sup> Our bodies change every year and yet in one sense it is the same body of which no one ever mistakes the identity. If God can and does rebuild a man five, six or many times more in this world during his life, is it mysterious that He can rebuild him once more at the time of the Resurrection? Observe the locusts in their life-growth. After periods of seventeen years, they reappear. Their resurrection takes place, so to say, every seventeen years.

Why should it be thought a thing incredible with us that Ahura-Mazda should raise the dead? Those clouds that

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1 Yt. xix, 11, 94-96.

are higher up than the birds fly what are they made up of ? They are formed out of drops of water from the oceans, drops from the rivers, ponds and pools on the face of the earth. If Ahura-Mazda, God, can make such brilliant clouds out of water-drops, many of them soiled and impure and raised from miles away can He not transport the fragments of a human body from the earth and out of them build all the material out of which bones and muscles and flesh are made.

If a manufacturer of telescopes were to drop one on the floor and break it, can he not mend it so that you can see through it again ? And if Ahura-Mazda drops the human eye into the dust, which He originally made, can He not restore it ? If the telescope-maker by a change of the glass and a change of focus can prepare a better glass than that which was originally constructed and can actually improve it, do you not think the Creator of the human eye can improve its sight and make the resurrection eye a hundred times better ?

An authentic writer says that in France in a Celtic tomb under a block were found flower seeds that had been buried two thousand years. The explorer took the seed and planted it and out of it bloomed in the fulness of time into a beautiful flowering plant. It remained buried thousand years and yet after that period it resurrected. A traveller says that he found in a mummy pit in Egypt garden peas which had been buried three thousand years ago. He brought them out and planted them and they sprang up in thirty days.

Things around us all suggest the resurrection of the dead man's body. Out of what all the flowers grew ? Out of the mould and earth. The brilliant beautiful butterfly, whence does it come ? From the loathsome caterpillar. Out of the silk worms come the fine silk that adorns our persons and homes. So we should not be surprised if out of the insignificant particles of our disintegrated material body



another body worthier sprang up. If we put silver into diluted nitre, it dissolves and disappears. Is the silver gone for ever? No. But in it some pieces of copper and silver reappear. If one force dissolves, another force reorganises. The insects that flew and the worms that crawled last autumn, have grown weaker and weaker till at last they have altogether stopped. They have taken no food since. They want none. They lie dormant and insensible but soon the south wind blows and they all rise from their dormant state. Can you not think that Ahura, God, can and may do as much for our bodies as He does for the wasps, spiders and snails?

Besides, there are instances of men and women entranced. A trance is practically death, followed by resurrection after a few days. Rev. William Tennent of whom Dr. Archibald Alexander, a writer who was anything but sentimental, wrote in most eulogistic terms:—"He seemed once to be dead. His spirit seemed to have departed. People came in day after day and said: "He is dead." But the soul returned and William Tennent lived and wrote his experiences of what he had seen while his soul had gone. Almost a similar account is given in the *Ardâvîrâf Nâmesh* about *Ardâ-vîrâf*, one of our greatest saints and high priests. He is described in the book as having entered and remained for some time into what is called suspended animation and as having given the soul excursion into the next world and came back to give account of all that he saw and experienced in Heaven and Hell. Do not this waking up of men from trance and this waking up of grains from their buried state of three thousand years, make it easier for us to believe our religion in its doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body?"

The subject of Resurrection is indeed suggestive of numerous questions which to the human mind may appear hopelessly mysterious and unfathomable. For example, it may

be contended that the bones of human bodies are bound to crumble and disintegrate with time and that the elements of which they are composed, shall be used up to serve other purposes in the economy of Nature, that particles of the dead body might enter into chemical compositions with mineral substances; some may be absorbed through the soil by plants to re-enter thus into other animal bodies; that this process is bound to resolve in an endless circuit through ages; that so far as human bodies are concerned, there would thus be millions of men as common owners, so to say, of the same inorganic particles; that therefore the doctrine cannot stand the test of reason which tells us that the dead will be revived out of their bones. Let me tell my reader that questions of this kind are as useless as they are incapable of rational solution. In religions there are many things we have to take on faith that defy reason and imagination. Without attempting to solve them I will refer my reader to a quotation from our Scriptures "Ahura-Mazda has willed it, has power to do it and shall do it." He can challenge this statement only who has no confidence in God's Power or Omnipotence. If Ahura had the Power in the first instance to build up our body, he can reconstruct it after it has crumbled to ashes.

My dear reader ! in matters of religion we perforce take many things for granted which we cannot explain; why not then this our religious doctrine of the Resurrection? We believe that our mind acts on our body; who can satisfactorily explain the process? Who can tell why one seed plant gives a blue flower and another a yellow or a white one? What make the orange blossom differently from the rose? Can we explain these and many other phenomena seen and observed in this world? No. we cannot explain even the common mysteries of our everyday life. Why should we then disown faith in this Zoroastrian doctrine of the Resurrection? There is at least no solace in the consideration that our bodies

once destroyed are destroyed for ever. Body and soul are to each other intimate friends. Did our body ever feel a pain which our soul did not? Or, changing the question, let me ask you: Did our soul ever have any trouble with which our body did not sympathise? Ahura-Mazda never intended the two such intimate friends to remain ever separated, so let us hope when the Resurrection Day comes, He in His infinite kindness will bring body and soul together. And, God, as our Religion reassures us, will reconstruct the body a good deal better than when it was first constructed. And as to the soul it will advance right into state in every way, better and, independent of death, into companionship with the best ( Ahura-Mazda ) in the best of the places. Garônmâna=Bhesht.

How encouraging, how hopeful and joyful is the confidence with which the holy authors of our Book inspire us—the confidence that at the Final Change of the world we are to be members of a society that will be organised and governed by a principle of imperishable life, and transported into a region where Human Nature will be free from sin and woes, exalted to new life, new powers, new friendships and new prospects in cooperation with higher beings and Ahura-Mazda. Such confidence, faith and hope do make us, Zoroastrians, feel with devout gratitude that this world where we are born and trained, is worthy of its Divine Author, Ahura-Mazda.

Take away from men such faith and such hope which Zoroastrianism kindles in their heart and their nature would be soured with sullen and discouraging thoughts as would make them feel that life was not worth living for.

Let us, therefore, bask under the sunshine of the hopes which our Scriptures light in our bosom. By nature and by our religion we Zoroastrians are a nation of optimists. We believe pessimism to be a menace to our battles of every day



life and in our war against Angra-man, the author of darkness. Let therefore all true followers of Zoroaster cheer up in the firm belief that this world of ours is with long strides on the way to those scenes of unmingled joy and beatitude which are so brilliantly portrayed by our Zend-Avesta. The world, as our inspired Book shows, is preparing to put on bridal array. And after the completion of that great preparation there shall light upon earth a great age of belief when the eternal truths which lie unfurled in the pages of our great and sacred Book, the Zend-Avesta, shall rule supreme in the hearts of men, more deep and profound knowledge will be their reward and they shall see the world as in the fullest harmony with Asha, the Order and shall behold the glory of their Great and Good Lord, Ahura-Mazda.